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ABSTRACT

This monograph offers seven case studies and supporting papers on university colleges and undergraduate divisions and their role in shaping the freshman college experience. An introductory section offers a preface, information on the authors and a first chapter "University Colleges Today" by Diane W. Strommer which examines the implications of an institutional unit for freshmen and reports on a survey of university colleges conducted during 1991 and 1992. Chapter 2, "An Historical Perspective (Ohio University)" by Samuel Crowl, looks at how the University College at Ohio University has served students for nearly 60 years. Chapter 3, "The Retention of Students (Ball State University)" (Indiana) by Barbara Weaver, examines the evolution over the past decade of the University College specifically designed to retain students. Chapter 4, "Coherence through Coordinated Advising (The Pennsylvania State University)" by Eric White depicts an undergraduate division developed to provide coherence in a large, diverse, research university. Chapter 5, "Flexibility at a Comprehensive University (The Ohio State University)" by Thomas L. Minnick describes how this large university assists students in coping with the choices and changes at a multiversity. Chapter 6, "Valuing the First-Year Student (Butler University)" (Indiana) by Marilyn K. Spencer, describes how a university college functions within a relatively small, private university, particularly in the college's mission to manage a core curriculum. Chapter 7, "Constancy, Change, and Campus Politics (University of Rhode Island)" by Diane W. Strommer, discusses some of the political issues surrounding university colleges especially at the University of Rhode Island. Chapter 8, "Supporting Students in the Historically Black University" (Alabama A&M University and others)" by Fran Johnson, addresses the role of the university college in the historically black university. Chapter 9, "The Differences Made: A Sampler and Data from Institutions with No Freshman College" and Chapter 10, "Issues for New University Colleges" both by Diane W. Strommer, draw conclusions about how university colleges make a difference. Appendixes contain the Association of Deans & Directors of University Colleges & Undergraduate Studies constitution, guidelines for oversubscribed or impacted programs, and sample mission statements and organization charts. (Contains 35 references.) (JB)

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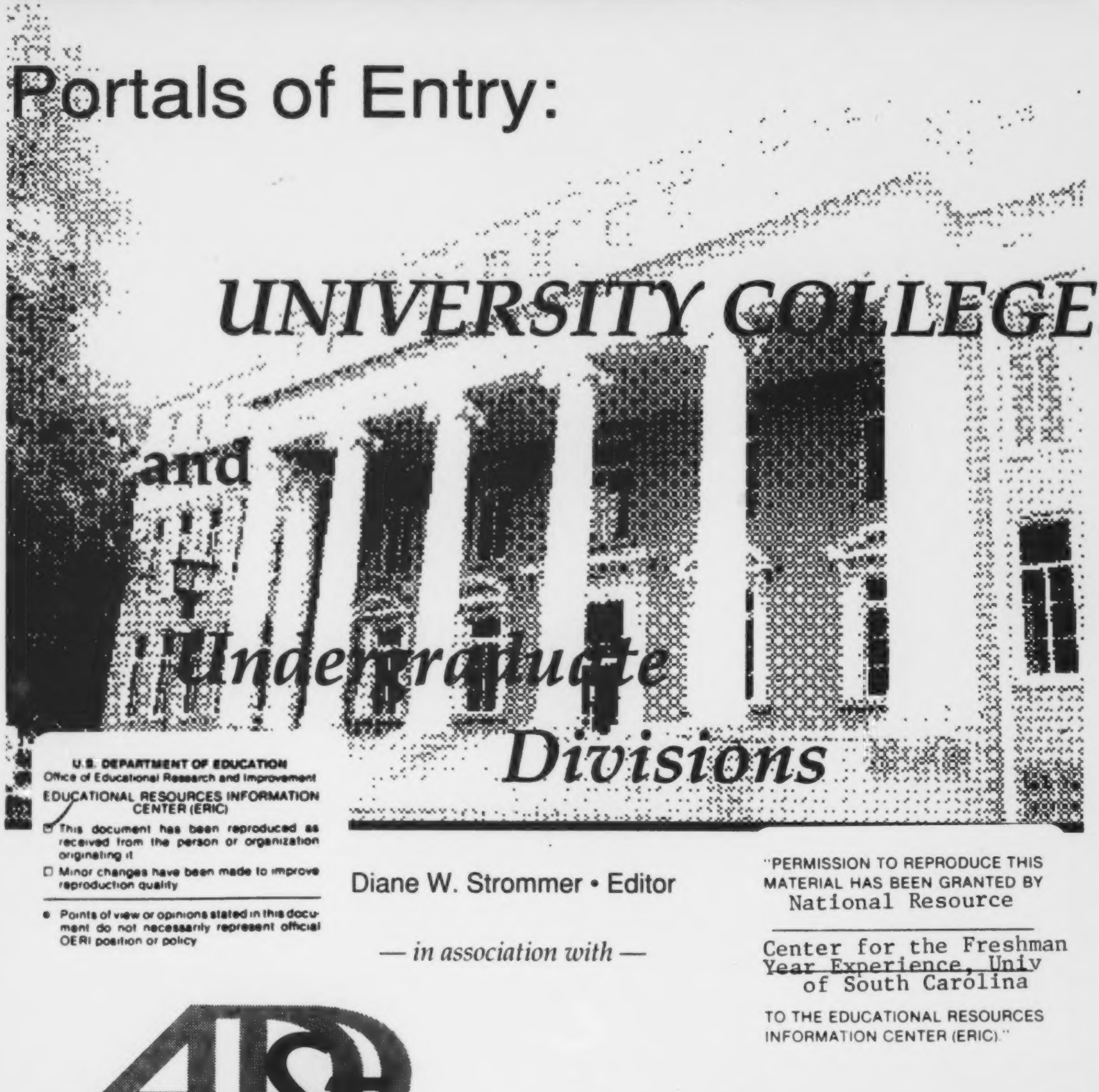

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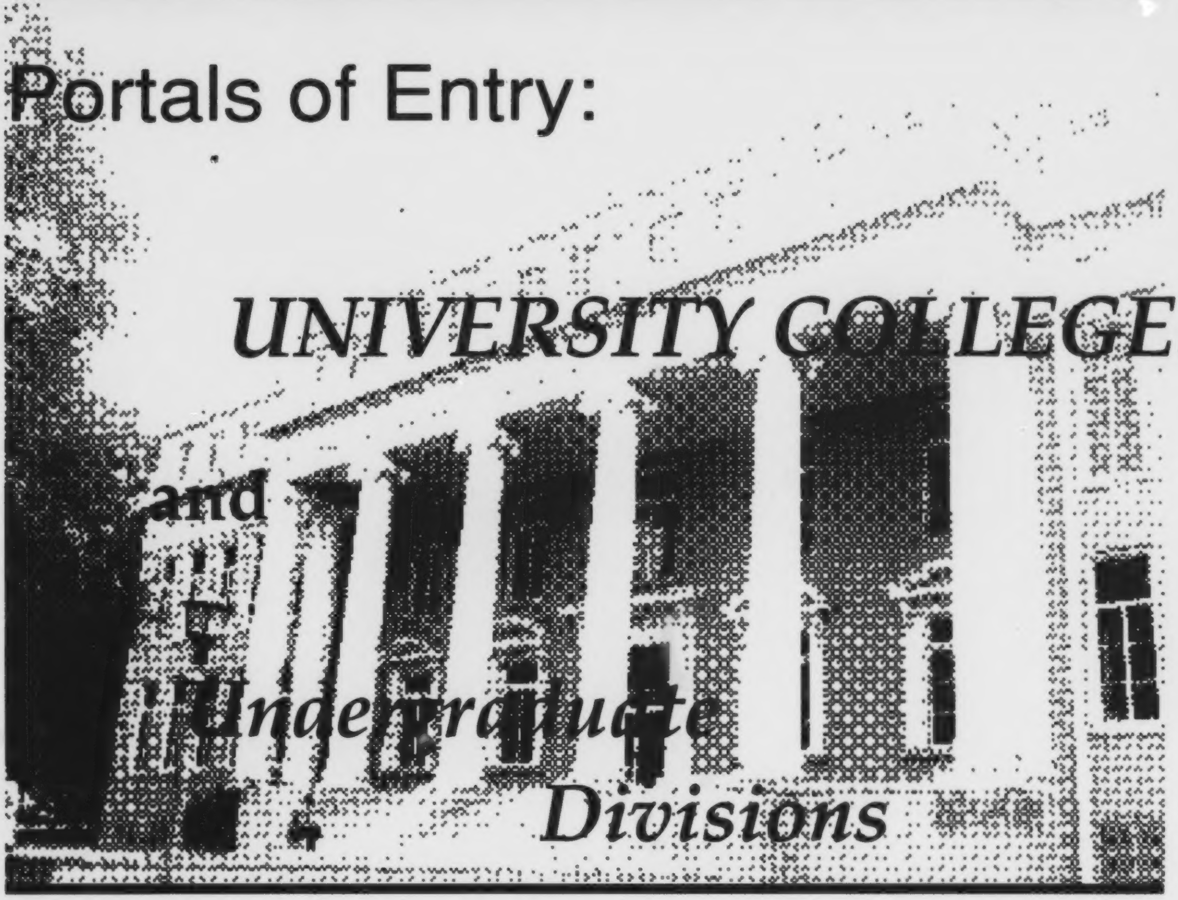

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Diane W. Strommer • Editor

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Background

When I accepted the position of Dean of University College at the University of Rhode Island in 1980, I did so because its collection of responsibilities and emphases interested me, though I knew little about the university college. Initially, University of Rhode Island's university college seemed unique, but then I learned that an acquaintance, Dr. Sam Crowl, had become Dean of University College at Ohio University. Delighted to find a colleague, I phoned Sam and launched the plans that I had concocted in isolation. What did he think of my attempting a survey to locate other university colleges to find out what they did? And then, assuming other university college deans existed, what about gathering for an informal annual meeting, rather like the deans' group called the Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences (CCAS) in its early years? Sam provided just the necessary encouragement.

So began a series of events that led from the first informal meeting in Newport, Rhode Island in 1986 and meetings in Columbus, Albuquerque, and Orlando in subsequent years to the formal founding in 1990 of the Association of Deans and Directors of University Colleges and Undergraduate Studies—henceforth known as the Association of Deans—and to this monograph (for the association's constitution, see Appendix A). Along the way was the first survey of university colleges and undergraduate studies in 1985, the results of which were presented at a National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) conference in 1986 and later became the basis of an article in the *Journal of the Freshman Year Experience*, "Designed for First Year Students: University Colleges Today," Strommer (1989).

Along the way also were the annual spring meetings with colleagues, meetings without invited speakers, panels, or workshops but with candid, lively conversations about our tasks and programs, our colleagues and students, our plans and concerns. Our members come from institutions exemplifying most of the range in American higher education; our diversity affords mutual instruction. Our annual meetings are open to those interested in learning more about university colleges or freshman units as well as leaders of existing ones.

Colleagues within this association responded enthusiastically to the plan for this monograph and contributed to it. Since almost nothing has been published about the university college, we hope this monograph will fill that gap and also suggest some ways to structure the first college year to better serve new students.

Overview of the Contents

Chapter 1 develops a context for what follows by examining the implications of an institutional unit for freshmen and highlighting the major purposes and features of these units through an analysis of a survey conducted during 1991 and 1992. The work of this survey, the second of university colleges and similar units, was supported by a research grant from the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA). Chapter 2 provides an historical perspective for these units by looking at the ways in which University College at Ohio University has served students for almost sixty years. Chapter 3 examines the evolution over the past decade of a University College specifically designed to retain students at Ball State University.

Chapter 4 shifts the focus slightly and depicts another model, the Undergraduate Division at Penn State University, a unit developed to provide coherence within a large, diverse, research university. Chapter 5 also concerns the large research university, but with a different slant, describing how a university college assists students in coping with the choices and changes confronted in the multiversity that is Ohio State University.

Chapter 6, in contrast, features how a university college functions within Butler University, a relatively small, private university, particularly in the college's mission to manage the core curriculum. Chapter 7 discusses some of the political issues surrounding university colleges, specifically as they have had an impact on the twenty-year history of the university college at the University of Rhode Island. Chapter 8 looks at the special role of the university college in the historically black university, focusing on Alabama A & M University. Chapter 9 draws some conclusions about how university colleges make a difference, describing some other models and institutions along the way.

A Note on Terms

Like others we have struggled with a gender neutral term for *freshman*, one less cumbersome (and more precise) than *first-year student*, and finally decided to stay with the generally accepted term. We use it as a generic term like *human* to refer both to women and men and to new students of all ages.

As this monograph indicates, many variations exist among the units called *University College*, and units known by other names are often essentially the same as a university college. Here we have used the term "university college" and "freshman units" generically and often interchangeably, even though the former might in fact be known by another name and the later may well serve students other than freshmen.

Acknowledgments

The second survey, the results of which are summarized in Chapter 1, was supported by a research grant from the National Academic Advising Association and some of the material in Chapter 1 will also be published in a forthcoming *NACADA Journal*. Thanks to NACADA, I had the able assistance of Jennifer Rose, a doctoral student in the Department of Psychology at the University of Rhode Island who made work on this second survey not only more pleasant and easier, but also, I believe, better for her capable assistance.

The Association of Deans is grateful for the enthusiastic support of this project from John Gardner, Dorothy Fidler, Betsy Barefoot, and others affiliated with the National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience at the University of South Carolina. They have placed the needs of first-year students on the national agenda and helped to insure that they remain a focal point for higher education.

Despite the current dispiriting state of higher education, colleagues and students remain a continuing source of joy. The Association of Deans acknowledges our mutual debt to each new class of first-year students who make our jobs always a pleasure, always a challenge, and always worthwhile.

Diane W. Strommer
Kingston, Rhode Island
December 1992

About the Authors

Samuel Crowl

Dr. Samuel Crowl is Trustee Professor of English at Ohio University where he has taught since 1970 and has twice been honored for distinguished teaching. He served as Dean of University College from 1981 to 1992. Crowl has held an Observership with the Royal Shakespeare Company and has published and lectured widely on performance aspects of Shakespeare. His book *Shakespeare Observed: Studies in Performance on Stage and Screen* was published by Ohio University Press in 1992. A graduate of Hamilton College, Crowl earned his Ph.D. at Indiana University.

Fran Johnson

Dr. Fran Johnson is Dean of the University College at Alabama A & M University and teaches in the Department of Psychology and Counseling. With the assistance of external funding, she has been involved in developing, implementing, and supervising academic support services for more than a decade. Among her administrative positions are service as director of general studies and director of academic advising. Johnson received her B.Ed. degree in elementary education from Chicago Teachers College in 1962 and M.Ed. degree in school counseling from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1973. In 1981 she completed her Ph.D. in counseling and college student personnel services at Purdue University.

Thomas L. Minnick

Dr. Thomas L. Minnick is Associate Dean of University College at Ohio State, where he earned his bachelors, masters, and Ph.D. degrees. Among his interests are eighteenth and early nineteenth century English literature, especially the art and poetry of William Blake, bibliography, and historical criticism. In 1978-79 he worked in Los Angeles as editorial consultant and research associate for Alex Haley, author of *Roots* and *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. Dr. Minnick has been president of the Friends of the OSU Libraries and the Ohio State Chapters of Phi Beta Kappa and of Phi Kappa Phi. He has also served as regional vice president of Phi Kappa Phi.

Marilyn K. Spencer

Dr. Marilyn K. Spencer, in her sixth year as Dean of University College at Butler University, also holds the rank of associate professor of economics in Butler's College of Business Administration. She earned her Ph.D. in economics at the University of Arizona. Dr. Spencer's work in economics focuses on state and local public finance and the labor force experiences of Hispanics. Most of her work, public addresses, and writings in the area of student development concern enhancing diversity, advising, and successful strategies for students underprepared for the transition to college. She is president-elect of the Association of Deans and Directors of University Colleges and Undergraduate Studies.

Diane W. Strommer

Dean of University College and Special Academic Programs at the University of Rhode Island since 1980, Strommer received her undergraduate degree in English from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and her M.A. and Ph. D. from The Ohio State University. A committed generalist, Strommer's publications include an edition of a seventeenth century masque, *Time's Distractions* (1976), articles on women authors, feminism, writing, education and advising. She is the co-author of *Teaching College Freshmen* published by Jossey-Bass in 1991 with Bette Lasere Erickson and is the founder and first president of the Association of Deans and Directors of University Colleges and Undergraduate Studies.

Barbara Weaver

Dr. Weaver joined the faculty at Ball State University in 1985 expressly to work in the new University College after serving for thirteen years on the English department faculty at Anderson University. Her college career began in University College at Ohio University; she later earned a B.A. from Anderson University and an M.A. and Ph.D. from Ball State. Appointed Dean of University College in 1989, Weaver also served as an executive board member on the Indiana Humanities Council, secretary-treasurer of the Association of Deans, and a founding member of the Indiana Teachers of Writing. Weaver's publications and professional papers include work on writing assessment, peer tutoring, women's studies, writing and literature, and developmental education.

Eric R. White

After earning his undergraduate degree in history from Rutgers University and his M.S. and E.D. in counseling psychology from the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. White joined The Pennsylvania State University staff in 1970 as a psychological counselor and coordinator of counseling services at the Delaware County Campus. Moving to University Park in 1975 as Coordinator of the Freshman Testing, Counseling and Advising Program, White was named Director of the Division of Undergraduate Studies in 1986. Active in the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA), White has served as the multiversity representative to the Board of Directors, Chair of the Placement Committee, and currently, as Chair of the Commission on Standards and Ethics in Advising. He is the current president of the Association of Deans and Directors of University Colleges and Undergraduate Studies.

Chapter 1 – University Colleges Today

Diane W. Strommer

Despite the recognized excellence of American higher education, its recent critics have been severe. Among other failings, inattentiveness to undergraduates has been one persistent criticism within and outside of the academy. As the problem of attrition continues, as the dropout rate remains high, as increasingly diverse students with new needs enter college, as competition for students grows tougher, as barriers to upper-division majors proliferate, and as concern for quality – of students and of programs – surface, many institutions reexamine how they serve their new students. Public research universities are particularly sensitive to charges that they have been heedless of undergraduates, particularly freshmen.

The university college, now more than fifty years old, has drawn renewed interest as an administrative unit to address these concerns and centralize resources as colleges and universities seek new approaches and new structures to involve and retain first-year students. Administrative structures matter. They often signify institutional directions and highlight institutional commitments. One way to highlight commitment to freshmen is to create a unit with designated responsibility for them.

New colleges on the university college model have emerged in increasing numbers in recent years, and many institutions are exploring the model's potential to meet their needs. University colleges do many things, as later chapters testify, but heightened attention to several related issues on the national level is certainly the source of much of today's interest in this administrative structure.

Recent works on higher education, on general education, and on student involvement sound many of the same themes: the need to focus on freshmen, to improve advising, to involve students in learning, and to foster relationships with faculty. Among the trends and innovations in general education reform identified by Gaff (1991), for example, is this new attitude toward the first-year student. "Today," he notes, "new students are receiving more attention to their intellectual and personal development, stronger advising, and better orientation to college through specially designed freshman seminars and related programs" (Gaff, 1991, p. 45). In *Involving Colleges*, authors Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, and Associates (1991) stress the priority given the new student at colleges recognized for involving students in their own learning. "The assumption underlying this commitment," they explain, "is that, by devoting resources to new students, the college will enable them to be productive, academically successful, and socially confident, and help them remove obstacles to attaining their learning and personal development goals" (Kuh et al., 1991, p. 141).

Among the examples given that transform a university into an "involving college" is the

University College at Wichita State University, a unit that "speaks to some of the specific, unique needs of Wichita State students" (Kuh et al., 1991, p. 245). Wichita's University College handles orientation programs, advising, academic support courses (including a course for parents of entering students), and other programs and services for beginning students. As Kuh and his associates observe:

> Having one unit deliver all these programs and services is administratively efficient. Moreover, by placing support services and learning opportunities in an office focused on the needs of entering students, University College functions in part as an early warning system for students who are experiencing problems in meeting the institution's high expectations for academic performance (Kuh et al., 1991, pp. 245-247).

Although concern for freshmen has existed at least as long as the modern research university, during the 1980s, attention to freshmen moved to the forefront of the national agenda against the background of the increasingly strident major critiques of higher education and the national freshman year experience, advising, and assessment movements. The National Conferences on The Freshman Year Experience began in 1982. In 1991-92 they drew about 2,000 participants to their 12 conferences and training sessions to share information about courses, programs, and services to meet the needs of freshmen. The Freshman Year Experience conferences have undoubtedly influenced the proliferation of freshman seminar programs, introduced in their contemporary form in 1972. On many campuses assessment has provided a clearer understanding of students at the beginning of their academic careers and the needs they bring to campus along with their refrigerators and VCRs.

The National Academic Advising Association, begun in 1979, also grew in membership and influence throughout the 1980s. Although, as Frost (1991) points out, actual practice probably has lagged behind the positive reports in the literature, the goals of developmental advising (Kramer & Spencer, 1989) appear to have strongly influenced methods of advising and concentration on the specific needs of new students.

During the 1980s, many of the national studies of higher education called for increased attention to the first year of college and noted that advising is often one of the most important—and neglected—areas. In his influential book *College: The Undergraduate Experience in America,* Boyer (1987), for example, observes, "The successful college offers a well-planned program of advising for all students, one that provides support throughout the entire freshman year. This is the goal, and yet we found advising to be one of the weakest links in the undergraduate experience" (p. 51). How that "well-planned program" might be organized is itself a neglected area as well.

In the report of a national survey on advising sponsored by the American College Testing (ACT) program, Habley (1988) comments that "little has been accomplished in the study of the ways in which advising programs are organized. Yet organizational framework . . . was second only to greater administrative recognition as the most pressing need of the 754 institutions that participated in the 1983 National Survey of Academic Advising" (p. 119). Habley (1988) suggests that this lack of attention to organizational models is "fostered by two themes which pervade the literature on advising programs"—belief in institutional uniqueness (and hence the impossibility of transferring models) and the tendency to "blur the distinction between an organizational model and the delivery of services within that model" (p. 119).

The ACT survey elaborates on seven organizational models earlier identified by Habley (1983). Particularly pertinent here is the organizational model for advising in most university colleges, what Habley calls the "Total Intake Model." As he defines it:

> The total intake model . . . vests initial advising responsibility for all students in an advising office. The advising office has original jurisdiction for the approval of all advising transactions until a set of institutionally predetermined conditions have been met [e.g., time limit, good standing, comple-

> tion of core courses]. . . . Once the student has met the predetermined set of conditions, jurisdiction for advising shifts from the advising office to the academic subunit in which the student is majoring. (1988, p. 124-125).

Habley identifies three major variations of this model, based on whether the unit 1) develops a curriculum and administers instruction, 2) develops and enforces academic policies, and 3) provides advising services. In this model, he also notes that the head is usually a dean or director who may also be responsible for coordinating the campus advising system and providing support for advising in the academic subunits.

Both in the achievement of advising goals established by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) and in program effectiveness, the Total Intake model was viewed most positively by respondents at institutions where those models are employed in the 1988 ACT survey. Among the seven different models, the only one rated higher on any dimension was the Self-Contained Model in which all academic advising from orientation to graduation takes place in a centralized unit.

Habley (1988) cautions that the purpose of the ACT research is not to identify the best organizational model for advising services, and this caution must be taken seriously. As he counsels, both the nature of the students and the complexity of the institution, among other factors, determine which model works best for any given institution. That said, however, one can infer some conclusions from Habley's research. It appears probable that complex institutions that enroll students with diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, academic abilities, and levels of preparation for college benefit from a more centralized, intrusive advising organization. The organizational model for advising in virtually all university colleges or divisions of undergraduate studies conforms to Habley's centralized Self-Contained or Total Intake Models.

University colleges are not just Total Intake Advising Units; their mission and scope are broader, encompassing many academic services during a student's freshman year and beyond. Excerpts of the objectives from the mission statement of the University College at Alabama State University suggests their comprehensiveness. "Designed to ensure students' optimal performance and achievement in the degree-granting colleges," the academic program has these objectives:

- To offer students a basic program of general studies and the prerequisite course for advancement to the degree-granting colleges.
- To make available to students academic services designed to promote the development of those skills and competencies that are prerequisite for success in collegiate studies.
- To provide students with academic advisement and counseling services that will maximize retention and promote successful achievement in college.

A sampling of other mission statements for university colleges are included in Appendix A.

Whether one speaks of "involvement in learning," "academic integration," or "transformational experiences," critical transitions typify the freshman year. Neither society nor students are as they once were—or as we thought they were. Today's freshmen bring new needs to campus and classroom, needs which must be addressed if they are to become effective learners (see, for example, Erickson & Strommer, 1991). Nonetheless, the significance of that first year remains underestimated. As Terenzini and Wright (1986) observe,

> The potential academic benefits of helping new students become academically integrated may not be fully appreciated. Programs that introduce students to the intellectual world of college (e.g., orientation, academic advising by faculty members, freshman seminars, or other intellectual experiences tailored for freshmen) may play a critical role in students' subsequent levels of academic integration and, consequently, in their academic development (p. 18-19).

One way to structure those programs and services is through a special freshman college. Unlike the graduate school, which it resembles, the freshman college has been little studied. "Designed for Freshmen: University Colleges Today," (Strommer, 1989) which summarized the results of a survey conducted in 1985 to identify and describe university colleges and similar administrative units for freshmen, is the sole source of specific information about this administrative structure. Given the interest in the freshman year and in improving advising, by 1991 it seemed timely to replicate the 1985 survey but also to expand its scope.

The 1991-92 Survey

This project, supported by a NACADA Research Grant, surveyed university colleges (and similar administrative structures) at 68 universities in order to 1) describe their roles and responsibilities accurately, 2) determine the changes that have taken place in these enrollment/advising units since the 1985 survey, 3) establish trends in the training of advisors and the delivery, monitoring, and rewarding of advising in these administrative units, and in other major areas of responsibility, and 4) explore related issues such as the effect of administrative affiliation (e.g., advising with learning assistance).

Two questionnaires were developed. The first, mailed to the deans or directors of appropriate administrative units, updated the 1985 survey and sought to uncover new trends in the freshman college. The second, mailed to the presidents of a matched sample of 68 institutions without a unit for freshmen, sought to determine key differences and the prospects for change to pinpoint trends in the organization of advising and other academic services for beginning students. The major conclusions drawn from comparing institutions with freshman units to those without them are summarized below.

The Sample

For the group termed "University College" or Group I institutions (*N* = 68) were identified as having a University College, a Division of Undergraduate Studies, or a unit that appeared to be similar to one of those two, such as a General College. These are primarily state-funded or state- assisted institutions, with only 6 private institutions among the 68. Most are moderately large to large with 42 of the 68 enrolling more than 10,000 undergraduates and only 10 enrolling fewer than 5000. Most of the schools enroll primarily white students, with the exception of 7 which enrolled predominantly African-American students, one which enrolled more than 50% African-American and Hispanic students, and one with more than 50% African-American and Asian-American students. *Peterson's Guide to Four-Year Colleges* (1990) identifies most (*N* = 38) as having moderately difficult admissions criteria; 21 are classified as non-competitive or minimally difficult, and 9 as having very difficult or the most difficult admissions criteria. Most institutions were located in metropolitan areas, with just a few in rural locations.

The comparison group of institutions without a freshman or university college, Group II, had characteristics that were proportionally very similar to Group I since they were matched on the number of undergraduate students enrolled, proportion of minorities enrolled, tuition fees, entrance difficulty level, source of support, location, and amount of on-campus housing available. Each of the 136 institutions was sent a questionnaire. One follow-up mailing and one phone call was made to each of the non-respondents. Responses were received from 46 of Group I for a response rate of 67.6% and from 37 of Group II for a response rate of 54.4%.

In order to sharpen the comparison with institutions sampled in Group II, the following criteria were applied to each of the responding colleges or units in Group I: 1) students enroll through the unit; 2) the unit includes academic advising, but its responsibilities go beyond advising; 3) a focus on the freshman year is central to its mission; and 4) it is headed by a dean or director. After applying those criteria, nine responses were eliminated, leaving 37 of the original 68 surveyed or 54.4%.

Although the similarities among units within this group of 37 are more notable than their differences, differences do exist between and among the three sub-groups. University colleges, with 17 responses, make the first sub-group. The second encompasses a number of other units, mostly colleges, which go by various names such as College of University Studies, College of General Studies, College of Basic Studies, College of Freshman Studies, the Junior Division, Division of General Studies, the Freshman College, and the like. Undergraduate Studies, 8 of which are included in this group, are the third sub-group.

The differences observed among these three sub-groups are primarily those of degree. University colleges seem to have the greatest communication with other university offices and the highest mean number of advising office responsibilities. They also offer academic services to the greatest number of special college populations, with undergraduate studies offering the least. The University College sub-group also has the greatest mean number of forms that these special services take and seems to show the greatest participation in freshman seminar programs. The Undergraduate Studies sub-group does less with its orientation programs, offering them to fewer different populations and in fewer forms. Each of these matters will be discussed in terms of the sample as a whole, but the conclusion suggested from the differences among the sub-groups is that a *college* structure tends to increase the number of populations served and the number of programs affiliated with the unit and services delivered by it.

Founding and Mission

Although 13% of the university colleges were founded prior to 1950, their numbers have grown modestly in each decade since: 8% were founded in the 1950s; 19% in the 1960s; 27% in the 1970s; 30% in the 1980s; and 3% in the first year of the 1990s. Until recent decades, university colleges apparently were founded independently without knowledge of similar colleges and often with an unwarranted sense of uniqueness or originality. Given the early lack of connection among these colleges, their parallel development and similar missions are striking.

Whether the college began in the 1930s or the 1990s, two motives typically underlay its founding—sensitivity to the freshman year as a transition and concern for forcing a premature and uninformed choice of major. Nearly half of the respondents (46%) observe that their college was founded as an organizational response to this perceived need of students for a transitional year. Closely related is the goal to improve retention from the first to second years (22%), to improve advising (19%), to provide an administrative "home" for undecided students (16%), and to provide coordination and oversight for the core curriculum or general education program (8%). But a large number of respondents also indicate that the founding of the college was in some measure motivated primarily by a political or administrative event: a presidential initiative, including that of a new president who wished to replicate the university college model from his former institution, a change from college to university status, a shift from being an upper-division institution to offering a full undergraduate program, or a considered response to a poor accreditation review.

With a few of the colleges now over 50 years old and many more than 20, we assumed some change in mission over time. While 14% of the respondents note that the mission of their college has remained essentially the same and 7% that their unit is new, 79% did report a change. The direction of change is generally toward inclusion and expansion. Sixty-eight percent who reported a change say their unit is now offering more comprehensive services to more students and has assumed more responsibilities. Usually, that means offering "comprehensive services for first-year students," although in some cases the mission expanded in other directions "to influence the total advising delivery system at the university."

Often in conjunction with increased comprehensiveness, respondents report a greater emphasis on student development (14%) and a greater emphasis on student retention (9%). Only 9% perceive any narrowing of their mission, a narrowing which in one case means eliminating

social programming and in others serving a smaller student population.
These units are led by deans or directors who, as administrators, are quite durable. Almost a third (32.4%) have served in their present position for five to nine years, 16% have served for ten to fourteen years, and 8% for more than fifteen years. Fourteen percent have led the unit for three to four years, and just 30% for two years or less. All describe their primary duties as administration.

Most deans or directors come from the faculty, either directly or from other administrative positions. Guidance, counseling, psychology, and human development are the graduate majors of 39% of the administrators of these units, most of whom hold a Ph.D.; humanities fields account for another 30%; administration or higher education, 9%; with the rest evenly distributed among various additional fields in the social sciences, in mathematics, or in the sciences.

The reporting relationships of these deans and directors reveal the academic orientation of the units they head. Almost 84% report to the Vice President for Academic Affairs or Provost, 7% directly to the president, and 9% to the Vice President of Student Affairs. The last percentage includes two deans who serve both as dean and as vice president of student affairs and one who serves as dean and associate vice president—attempts, perhaps, to form closer ties between the two university divisions.

Responsibilities

Unlike many other Total Intake Models such as an advising center, these freshman colleges all admit students and serve as their enrollment units for a period of time. These freshman colleges' primary responsibilities are summarized in Table 1. All handle advising programs, academic support services, and orientation (although this is a shared responsibility on some campuses); all enforce and monitor academic policy. The majority (60%) offer academic programs or services to some groups of students throughout their undergraduate years, such as the honors program or college (27%) or minority / multicultural student services (19%); others are responsible for high school liaison programs (27%). Most (51%) are responsible for collecting and disseminating data on incoming freshmen, and a third or more, for such activities as placement testing (38%), the general education or core curriculum program (35%), and the maintenance of a degree audit system (35%). Beyond the basic advising, academic support, and orientation programs, the colleges have developed special programs and services for particular populations of students: multicultural students (60%), athletes (57%), older students (49%), learning disabled (46%), honors (43%), commuters (24%), residents (24%), and international students (22%), among others. These services range from specifically trained and assigned advisors (68%), structured staff/student interactions (46%), courses developed to meet specific needs (43%), extended hours of service (41%), workshops designed to meet specific needs (38%), structured faculty/student interactions, such as organizing meetings between faculty and prospective majors (27%), and other services such as free tutoring or mentoring programs (11%).

In responding to a request to identify new responsibilities, one dean commented, "We are the place where the institution responds to changing societal needs." Adding a program or service to meet a newly identified need, such as those of learning disabled students, is typical. A total of 18 figures shown at the end of this chapter summarize these survey data. For example, Figure 1 (shown at end of this chapter) categorizes those areas of responsibility added over the past five years, except for the 30% reported that are unique to a single institution. Needs tend not to diminish. When asked what responsibilities had been eliminated during the past five years, the majority (58%) responded "none." On some campuses (24%), one or two responsibilities had been transferred to another office—efforts for honors students were decreased on one campus, for example, in conjunction with establishing an Honors' Center. Responsibilities for special admissions and minority recruitment programs were shifted on another campus to Minority Student Services. Rarely do the deans and directors report that the

Table 1

Freshman College Primary Responsibilities

Programs or services offered:	Percentage
Advising programs	100%
Advising center	49%
Academic support services	100%
Tutorial services	54%
Skills development programs	54%
Retention programs	54%
Learning assistance center	41%
Other remedial programs	41%
Supplemental instruction program *	3%
Orientation programs	100%
Academic programs or services for special groups	60%
High school liaison programs	27%
Honors program or college	27%
Minority/multicultural student academic services	19%
Collection and dissemination of data on freshmen	51%
Placement testing	38%
General education or core curriculum program	35%
Maintenance of degree audit system	35%
Career services	22%
Assessment programs	19%
Study abroad	19%
National student exchange	16%
Admissions	16%
Registrar	16%
Internship programs (credit/no pay)	14%
Psychological counseling services	14%
Instructional development program	14%
Community college relations	14%
Cooperative education programs	8%
Financial aid	8%
Summer school	8%
ROTC	8%
Advanced placement program	5%
Computerized advising	5%
English as a second language	5%
Trio programs	5%
Other responsibilities	19%

*May be included in the Learning Assistance Center in some universities institution eliminated a program or service, although a few (18%) list things no longer done—produce transfer guides, re-recruit "stop-outs," or organize an undergraduate research program. Several are eliminating one or all associate degree programs.

Advising Services

While the freshman colleges and units surveyed here report responsibilities beyond academic advising, advising is fundamental to their mission. More than two-thirds enroll virtually all entering freshmen and most new transfer students; the remainder enroll all undecided freshmen. Figure 2 (shown at end of chapter) summarizes the groups of students for whom they organize advising in line with the Total Intake Model. With two exceptions, that breakdown is virtually identical in every category to the one reported in the 1985 survey. Among the sophomores a shift has occurred, and the numbers of units enrolling all sophomores has decreased from 19% to 8%. The number of students who are undecided has remained stable, but those who do not meet the requirements of a degree program have emerged as a large group. In 1985 the only seniors enrolled were in the college's own degree programs. The change suggests the lengthening time it now takes students to select a major (and earn a degree) and the troublesome matter of oversubscribed majors which is further discussed in Chapter 9.

About 30% of the institutions also advise certain groups of students regardless of their class year, such as all non-degree students, athletes, students with learning and other disabilities, all members of minority populations, and all adult students. Beyond these numbers, about a quarter enroll all new transfer students (26%), almost 50% enroll undecided transfer students, and others (29%) also enroll those who are pre-professional (e.g., health) or who do not meet the admissions standards of the degree program. Fourteen percent, an increase from 4% in 1985, are responsible for the campus' non-matriculating (non-degree) students, some of whom may be in an early option high school program, visiting students, or other special categories. Seventeen percent enroll the institution's honors students and 17% the "special services" students.

The major trend in the delivery of advising (Figure 3) since the 1985 survey is in the increase of the exclusive delivery of advising by faculty (from 14% to 20%) and the decrease in the exclusive delivery by professional staff advisors (from 36% to 26%). One institution reports that advisors like librarians have special faculty status, but expectations for them are different from "teaching and research faculty." Now, as in 1985, most institutions rely on a mix of faculty, graduate students, and professional advisors. Eight percent of the institutions report employing retired faculty as advisors, which only one institution did in 1985. Figure 3 summarizes the current breakdown for the delivery of advising.

Quality assurance is an important aspect of any advising program, and Figure 4 provides a rank ordering of the methods deans and directors reported to provide a high quality advising program. More attention is clearly being paid to ensuring the high quality of an advising program, as evidenced, for example, by the shift from 17% reporting the evaluation of advisors in the 1985 survey to 67% today.

When advising counts in tenure and promotion decisions, some claim, it will become a valued activity to faculty. In 1985, 46% of the deans and directors reported participating in tenure and promotion decisions. While the increase to 63% for this survey appears to be a good sign, most of those who do participate (66%) report that advising is not even considered in the process, and even more (81%) noted that when it is, it is given a low weight in the decision. Only 5% report that it is both considered and highly weighted; 14% say it is given medium weight.

Undecided Students

Undecided students ("undeclared" or "exploratory") are a major concern of freshman units, sometimes even the reason for their existence. We know their numbers are large despite the cautions of some respondents about the lack of precise data, the difficulty of distinguishing between those who enter as "undeclared" and those who change their minds during the first semester, and the practice of a few schools that admit students with "intents" but no majors. Even so, almost 40% report that 31% or more of their freshmen enter as undecided; 21% judge 21 to 30% do, 36% estimate 10 to 20% and only 3% less than 10% (see Figure 5). All schools impose a time limit for remaining undecided; for 52% it is the end of the sophomore year; the rest limit students to the middle of their junior year or the completion of a specified number of credits and/or a set of requirements (Figure 6).

The majority of university colleges provide some kind of assistance in choosing a major to undecided students (see Figure 7). These students enjoy considerable assistance from the unit. For Example, 79% offer advising by specially trained advisors; 59% offer courses such as "Career Planning and Life Options," "Life Planning," "Career Exploration," or "Gateway to College Learning;" and 56% offer workshops like "Decide," "What Do I do with a Major In?" "Strategies for Finding a Major," or "Career Planning." These workshops last from one to half a dozen or more sessions and are often offered in the residence hall or commuter lounges. Other assistance is provided through testing (e.g., Myers-Briggs, Strong Interest Inventory), interactive computer programs such as "Discover" or SIGI PLUS, and referrals to career counselors or psychological counseling services. A few colleges offer Major Fairs or a series of presentations by the degree colleges about their programs. Written materials about the various majors provide yet another source of information.

A few institutions (6%) offer undecided students a broad degree program; other students shift into a general liberal studies degree by default when denied their first choice major.

Major Changers

The extent of freshman uncertainty is highlighted by the whirligig of changes in major during that first year. Thirty-five percent of the deans and directors report that 31% or more of the freshmen change their major during the first year (see Figure 8). Assistance to these students generally conforms to that provided undecided students. For Example, 79% receive specialized advising; 46% offer special workshops, and 42%, courses; 21% offer other services including 3% which offer a special curriculum (Figure 9).

One third of the respondents report that despite their large numbers, freshmen who change their major face obstacles. Primary is the still pervasive assumption that freshmen enter college certain of their major field of study. That assumption leads to curriculum patterns punitive to the uncertain student—required courses in the major that begin with the first semester and follow in lock step sequence, introductory courses taught only in the fall, never spring, never summer—and to the notion that career planning is for seniors, with little support or resources for career planning for freshmen. The result is often loss of time in earning a degree, certainly one explanation for the increasing numbers of students who take five or more years to earn the bachelors' degree.

Restricted Majors

Uncertainty, however, is often not the reason for change of major after the freshman year. Increasing numbers of students are denied access to their first choice major, covered in more detail in the concluding chapter and Appendix B. Ninety-five percent of the respondents report that certain majors at their institution have special requirements for entrance to the junior year, and of those 5% cite requirements beyond satisfactory progress for *all* majors.

Requirements and procedures for moving into the major vary widely, even within a single institution. Some majors mandate an application process, some impose numerical limits, some set a specific grade point average (typically, 2.5 to 3.25 or even higher), and still others require specific grades in a specified course or set of courses. The education major, which has overtaken business as being the major restricted most frequently, often requires a certain score in a national teacher preparation test as well as a higher grade average.

While the deans report loosening restrictions for the business major, 57% of the institutions still prescribe some. The various fields of the health professions account for the next largest numbers of restrictions (53%) with 32% in nursing, 11% in pharmacy, and 8% in the various therapies: occupational, respiratory, and physical (see Figures 10-12).

This trend, more fully addressed in Chapter 9, poses a variety of problems for students, particularly those who otherwise meet the academic standards of the institution, and is a growing problem within higher education.

Orientation

All of the respondents are involved to some extent in orientation programs, either as a shared responsibility or as the office fully in charge of at least some of the programs (68%). Divisions of undergraduate studies were less likely to participate in orientation programs than university colleges or other freshman colleges. While the participation in orientation programs appears to have declined from the 1985 survey (from 100% involved to 82% fully responsible), it is more likely to reflect the greater number of undergraduate studies divisions in this sample than in the earlier one.

Orientation programs take many different forms. The trend toward longer orientation programs is reflected in the 28% who report a freshman week in the fall before classes begin, the 41% who report a 2- to 3-day summer program, and the few institutions that have both. The form of the orientation program often accommodates the clientele– weekend and evening programs at colleges with large populations of adult students, programs immediately preceding the academic semester at those with large numbers of out-of-state students. A handful have substituted a one-semester required course for shorter orientations.

Summer programs remain the most popular and range in length from one-week sessions (4%) to 2- to 3-day sessions (41%) to one day programs (45%), of which 21% focus solely on registration and advising, reserving the student affairs aspects of orientation to a fall program. If offered at all, mid-year programs tend to be shorter, from half-day sessions (4%) to a day-long program (24%) to two-day programs (7%).

Instruction

Most university colleges and other units for freshmen are involved with some aspect of instruction. A slightly smaller percentage, however, are responsible for degree programs than reported in the 1985 survey, with 30% responsible for associate degree programs (compared with 36% in 1985) and 30% for baccalaureate programs, 14% for a general or liberal studies degree and 16% for other programs such as interdisciplinary honors or university studies degrees (compared with 36% total in 1985).

Enrolling most of the students affected by a general education or core curriculum program, most deans and directors of the freshman colleges, not surprisingly, have some relationship to that aspect of the curriculum. In the 95% of the institutions with a core or general education requirement, the colleges have a range of responsibilities (see Figure 13).

Freshman Seminar

Almost three-quarters of the institutions surveyed (73%) offer a freshman seminar program which involves the university college. Some of the seminars are of the University 101, extended freshman orientation, type; others are traditional academic courses on topics specifically designed for freshmen. Figure 14 summarizes the relationships between these courses and the colleges. Most freshman seminars provide credit, typically degree credit.

Other Instruction

Among the "other" courses offered by university colleges and undergraduate studies are re-admission seminars for previously dismissed students, special re-entry courses for adult learners, and core courses. Courses are taught by professional staff at 51% of the institutions, by regular faculty at 41%, and by graduate students at 8%.

Academic Support Services

All of these units have the primary institutional responsibility for offering a program of academic support services, sometimes to the entire college community. Almost all the deans remark on the increased necessity for expanded academic support services. A few institutions have developed extensive programs of supplemental instruction; others offer study tables in high risk courses, typically math and the sciences. Others have inaugurated teaching and learning centers. Many are responsible for a learning center; many others offer courses that are summarized in Figure 15. Credit arrangements for these courses vary widely, from 75% giving full degree credit for a course in career development, 53% in study skills, and 40% in English as a Second Language, to disallowing degree credit for basic writing skills at 67% of the institutions. It is fairly typical for institutions to give credit, but not degree credit, for many developmental course offerings, but even so, considerable differences in practice exist.

Academic Policy

Monitoring and enforcing academic policy (as well as creating it from time to time) are the remaining major responsibilities for most of these colleges. The specific matters monitored and enforced are summarized in Figure 16. Major academic decisions, such as dismissal and appeals of dismissal, tend to be made either by the dean (or delegated to an assistant) or by a committee. The dean's decision usually follows a committee review and recommendation, confirms a list generated by the registrar according to some pre-established criteria, or is made on a case by case basis. Decisions made by a committee may be final or may be further appealed to the dean.

Most other decisions are made by the dean or a member of the dean's staff. Probationary or dean's list status often occurs automatically according to some pre-determined grade point standard.

Institutional Climate and Politics

Colleges or divisions primarily for freshmen have not enjoyed the stability of the degree colleges or even of the graduate schools with which they have much in common. Reviews, evaluations, and restructuring occur even as the expectations for what the unit can and should do may burgeon. Figure 17 summarizes the reported source of the support for and opposition to these units. Respondents often modified their answers. If, for instance, they reported that most opposition came from faculty, they might add "just a few" or "those who don't understand the system." Similarly, virtually all who identified deans of other colleges as the major source of opposition to the college or unit modified it by saying "only one" or "some" or "only two specifically." Another commented, "It's hard to get a research-oriented dean to support advising adequately."

Most of the comments on the nature of the opposition centered on the always troublesome matter of resources. It's hard to get your fellow deans to love you when you're perceived as cutting into their piece of the pie. As one respondent put it, "the few murmurs still heard have to do with funding—whether the institution would save money if our unit were eliminated." Another commented on "the misconceptions involving the effect of the funding formula." Dollars and student numbers also get intertwined. One university college dean noted, "College deans with declining enrollments want all the numbers they can get"; another, "[some] fear that our unit is 'stealing' students from the colleges." Another coupled the two issues, discerning that some perceived the unit as a drain on institutional resources, but what they want are just the dollars, not the students, especially not the problem students.

Some of the opposition is not to the university college but rather to the quality of students being admitted, to offering academic support services, or even to a general education program, matters related more to today's students than to a structure serving them. The other major objection similarly concerns the issue of who shall advise, such as the complaint that the unit limits faculty contact with freshmen or with their majors during the freshman year, complaints pertinent only to units without faculty advisors. If a system does not exist to identify potential majors (as, for instance, through a curriculum code of their intended major), the inability to identify majors might reduce budgetary support in certain budget systems.

Most respondents identified more than one source of support for their college or unit. Mentioned most was support from the central administration (68%), support shown not only by providing a "fair budget," but also by recognizing and caring about what is done for students. Respondents observe that university colleges and similar units develop strong campus endorsement over time. What helps, they suggest, is for the university college to have an effective dean, provide high quality services, and be useful to the campus community. "We receive support," one said, because "the quality of what is done is consistently strong and we have two awards to prove it." "We have widespread support," noted another, "because no degree college is prepared or equipped to provide assistance to new freshmen and undecided students." There is the "recognition of student needs that would be inadequately met through college structures," commented another.

Advantages of Freshman Colleges

But does it really matter to have a college structure for freshmen? The comparison between institutions with freshman units and those without yielded five areas of statistically significant difference (see Figure 18). At institutions with a freshman or university college, students are more likely to find services centralized with connections between and among orientation, advising, learning assistance, career services and the like, special populations of students are more likely to find their specific needs addressed, and all students find services in more different forms from specialized advising to workshops and courses. The other area of difference is advising. In colleges and universities with a university college, the advising center assumes a broader range of responsibilities and services and, most importantly, takes a greater number of steps to monitor advising quality. The data suggest that in key ways, having a university college makes a decided difference.

Among the advantages which university college directors believe freshmen gain from "belonging to a college which addresses their needs" is its comprehensiveness, the "coordination and concentration of effort in 'the freshman year experience'." A "one-stop location," one suggested, "a place where someone is available on a drop-in basis if they [students] have an issue or concern" provides better communication and combines "the efforts of advisors and other academic support personnel in a comprehensive program." Another noted the advantages to students of having "all academic services in a single location"; another the "uniformity, the personal, individualized attention to students and the coordination of their first year's work." "A neutral, safe harbor," a "neutral home at first to give time for exploration before declaring a major," and the "support of an advisor who is pro-active in the relationship" relieve students of having to declare a major prematurely. They "can have the opportunity," as one put it, "to identify with an area of interest without having to feel tied to that major."

Centralization, respondents agree, simplifies and personalizes the institution for beginning students and improves the quality of services for them. Freshmen know where to go to find help and information, staff and advisors better communicate and coordinate programs and services, and more frequent communication with students takes place. One respondent summed it up this way: "[The college] simplifies the process and creates a multifaceted, comprehensive approach with the goal being the best interest of the individual student and a singular management of resources."

Understandably, the deans and directors found few disadvantages for students in the structure. Most would no doubt agree with the rather chauvinistic comment, "there are no disadvantages; it is clearly a superior system." Some did, however, point out a few problems including the constant necessity for explanation. Because these colleges are not well known, one does have "to explain to students and parents the purpose of the University College and why students are not admitted directly into degree-granting colleges."

While usually seen as a virtue, comprehensiveness can also be a vice. A sharply defined mission may be diffused until the unit becomes a catch-all for administrative and academic problems. Of perhaps greater concern is the dependence for faculty advisors on the other colleges. Sometimes no problems exist; other times, the inability to control the selection, evaluation, and reward of faculty advisors is a real constraint.

Although this survey did not address budget matters directly, cost-efficiency was frequently cited as an advantage to the institution with a university college. As one respondent said, "having a single unit that can focus on freshman advising and retention issues, the university is able to focus its resources efficiently to assist freshmen make a successful transition to the university." Efficiency, accountability, productivity, advocacy, credibility, and consistency were all cited as advantages to the institution. The existence of a university college, another respondent commented, also "enables the deans of the degree colleges to be more focused on faculty and research and graduate programs knowing that undergraduate needs are being attended to by a colleague. It gives the institution a spokesperson for the freshman and undergraduate student; it raises the status of their concerns and reassures parents." Having this unit improves retention rates, and better retention "can be a recruiting tool for the institution."

Only 11% of the respondents discerned any disadvantages to the institution, though the lack of tenured faculty and lack of control over faculty advisors were mentioned. Another noted the potential disadvantage inherent in having one dean responsible for freshmen or for undergraduate education. Assured of their colleague's attention, deans of the degree colleges might go too far in ignoring the needs of lower division students. Only one respondent noted that "the program and its staff are a significant budget item," most arguing rather that the unit was, in fact, cost-effective.

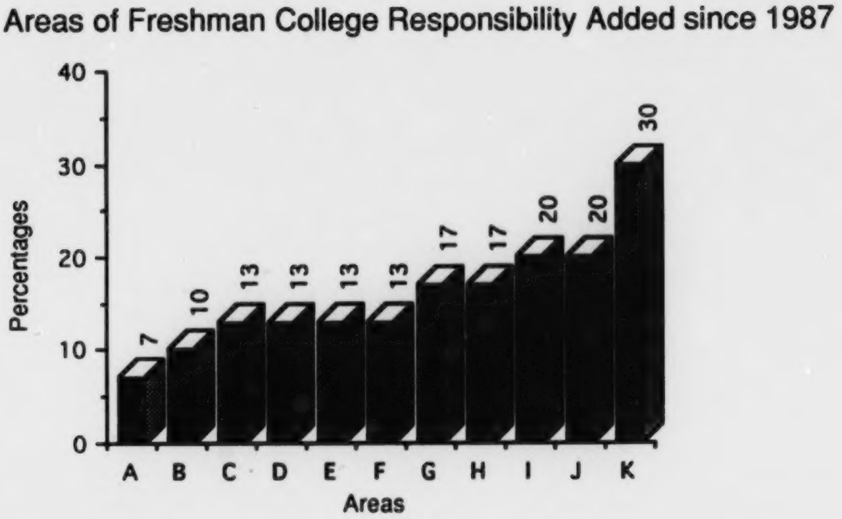
The Future

If the deans of these units had unlimited power for change, what would they do? Most said, "More." "I would provide additional resources," said one, "to allow the unit to expand its services to students at academic risk and to expand pro-active advising and retention activities." In a similar vein another dreamed of changing "my budget, specifically, the number of positions. Students (and their families) want, need, and expect more services all the time, but the staff does not increase. Large segments of the university neither understand nor accept that students and their needs have radically changed over the last several decades."

Others would like to improve the general education program, reducing section size or strengthening their college's involvement in it. Several mentioned reducing or eliminating the problems associated with limited enrollment programs; some dream of being fully computerized or on an electronic network. Twenty-four percent would reduce the advisor/advisee ratio; 18% would require a freshman seminar course; 12% would recast their units as a university college. Others have less concrete goals: "have more clout," said one. Another longed to "eliminate the petty and subtle fears which people have about such a unit," and "have the university more forcefully recognize the existence of the undecided student."

When asked to assess the major challenges for their units in the next five years, the deans' and directors' responses to the open-ended questions disclosed a common theme. Almost all foresaw the necessity to mediate between the increasing needs of a diverse student population and a steady or declining resource base. To do more with less while maintaining high quality programs and services and staff morale sums up the challenge they anticipate. That may well be the task for all of higher education.

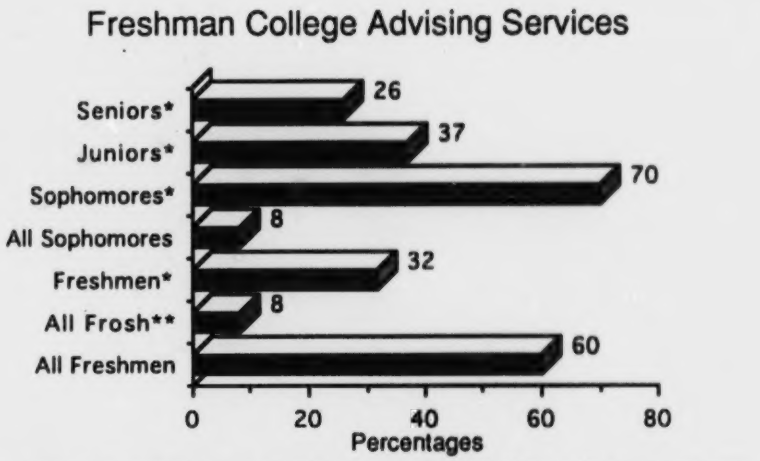
Figure 1



A = Undergraduate research
B = Honors program
C = Program assessment
D = Promotion of teaching
E = Career counseling

F = Special programs for transfers
G = Programs and services for athletes
H = Freshman seminar programs
I = Orientation programs
J = Services for learning disabled students
K = Learning centers

Figure 2



*who are undecided, undeclared, or unqualified for a degree program
**all freshmen except those in 1 or 2 majors

Figure 3

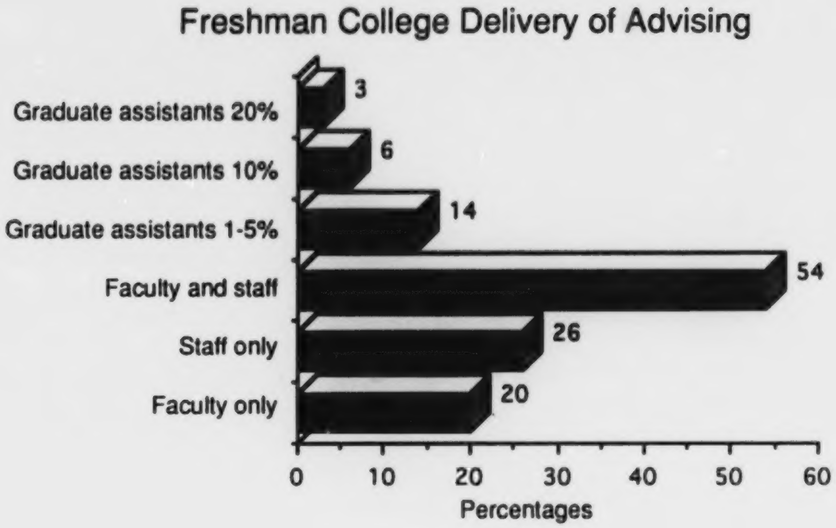


Figure 4

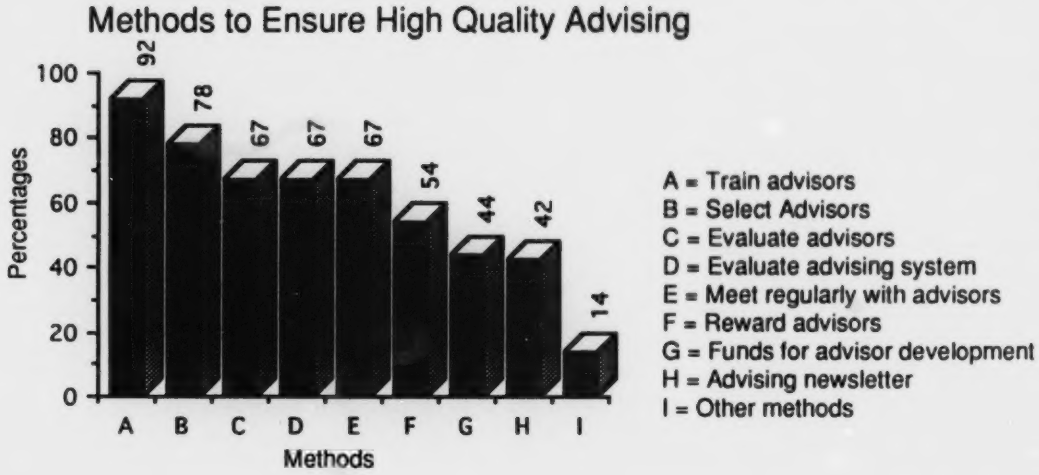
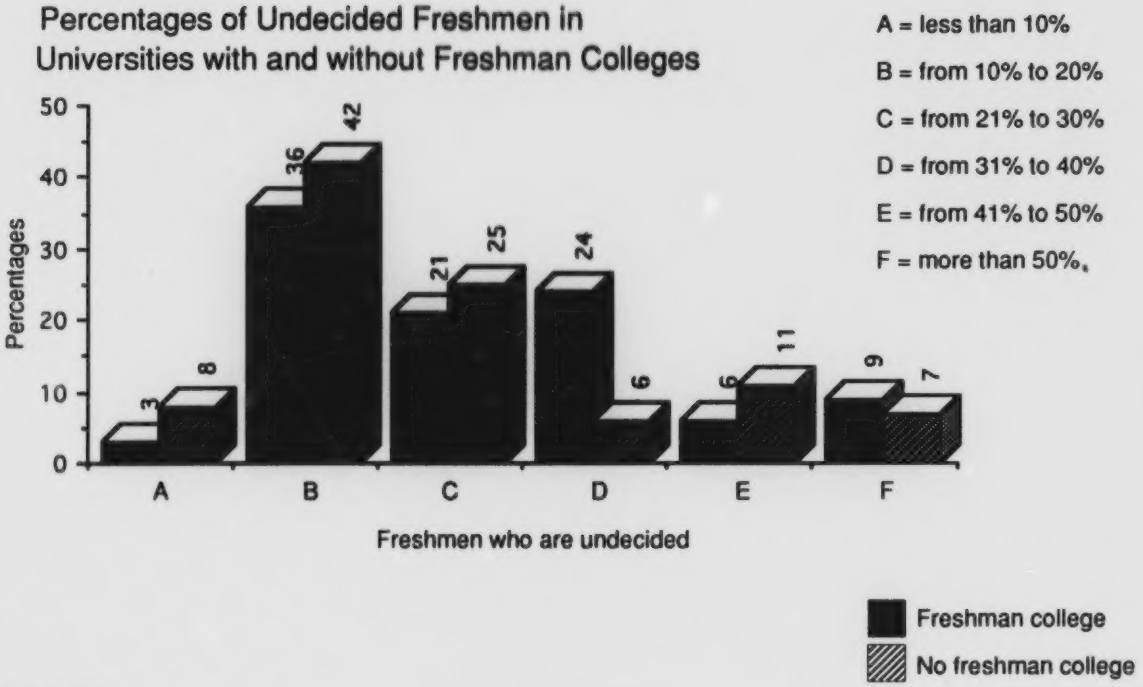
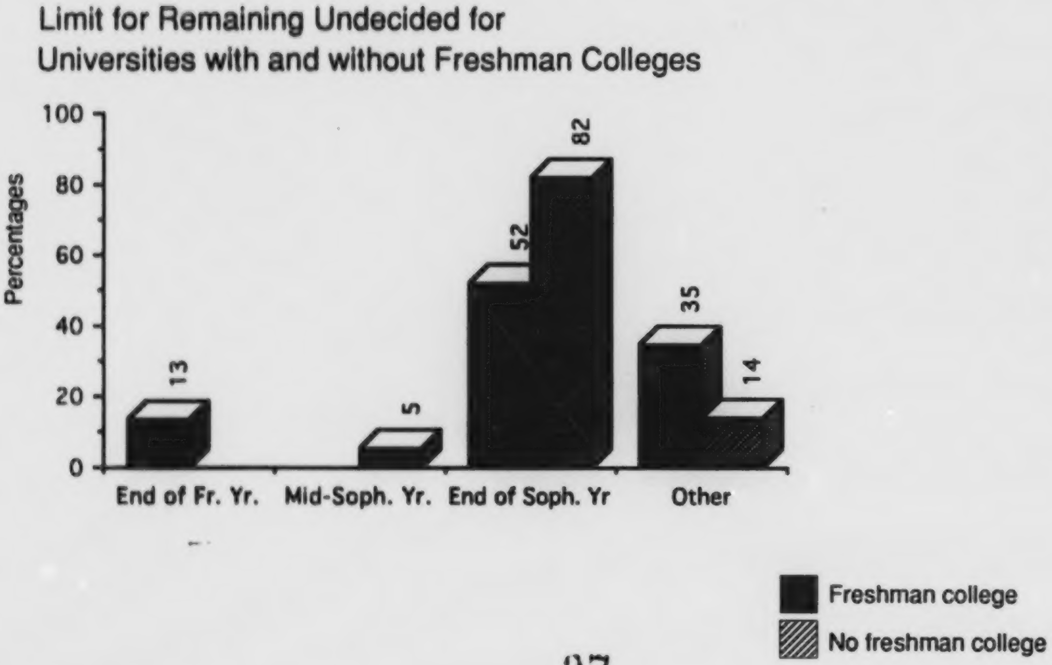


Figure 5



Percentages of Undecided Freshmen in Universities with and without Freshman Colleges

Figure 6



Limit for Remaining Undecided for Universities with and without Freshman Colleges

Figure 7

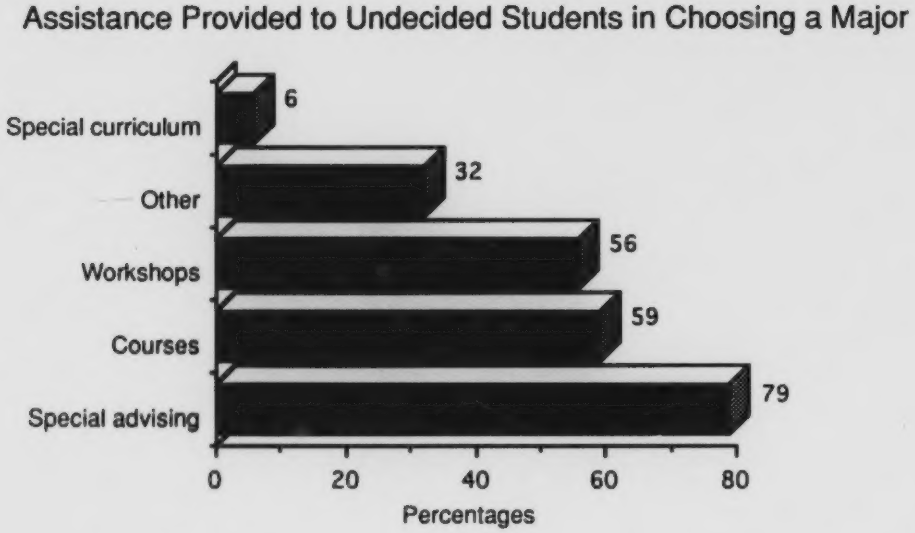


Figure 8

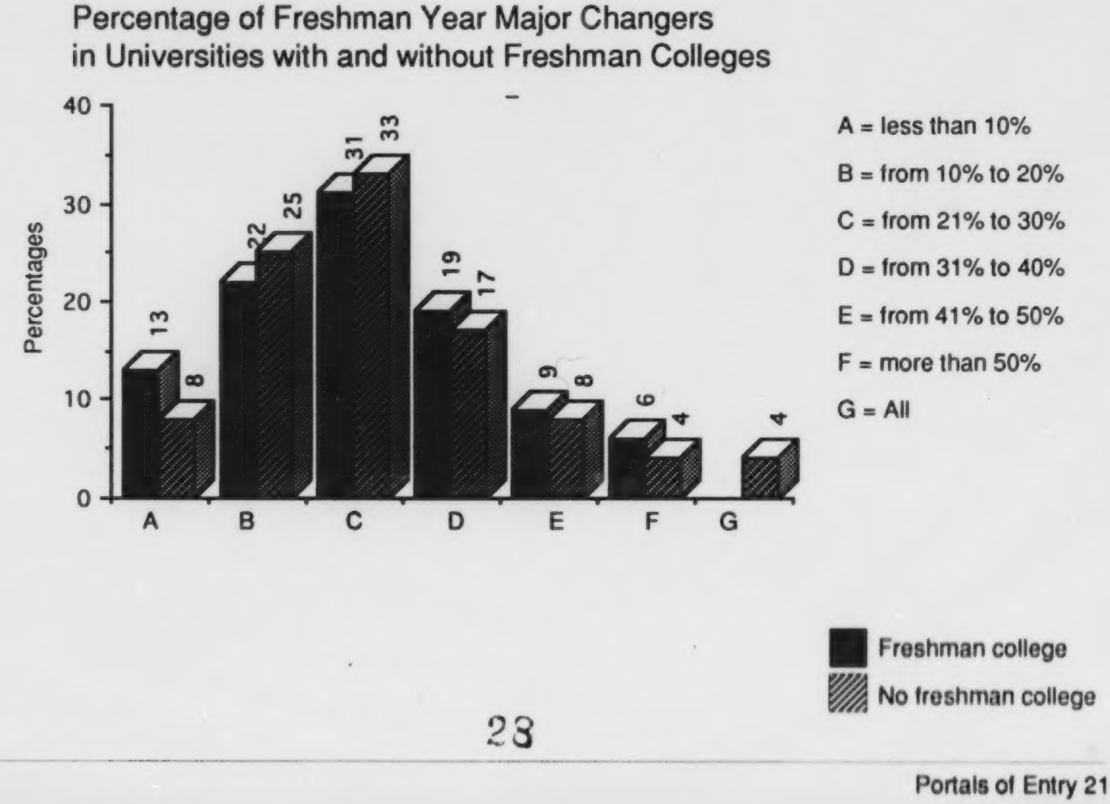


Figure 9

Assistance Provided to Students Changing Majors

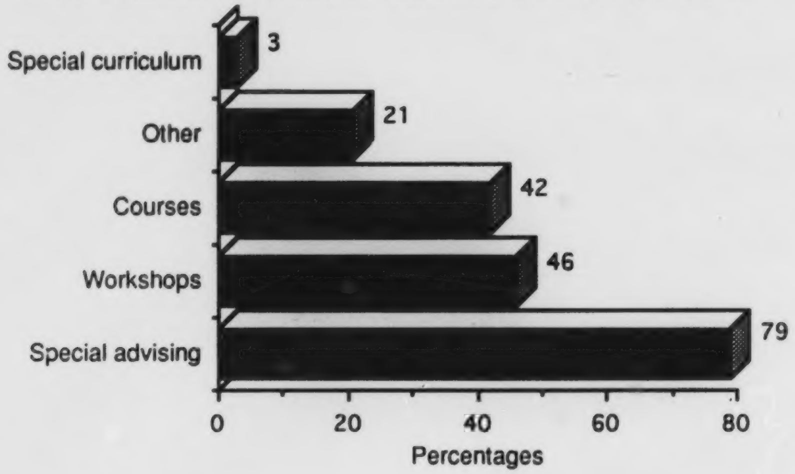


Figure 10

Restricted Majors in Universities with and without Freshman Colleges

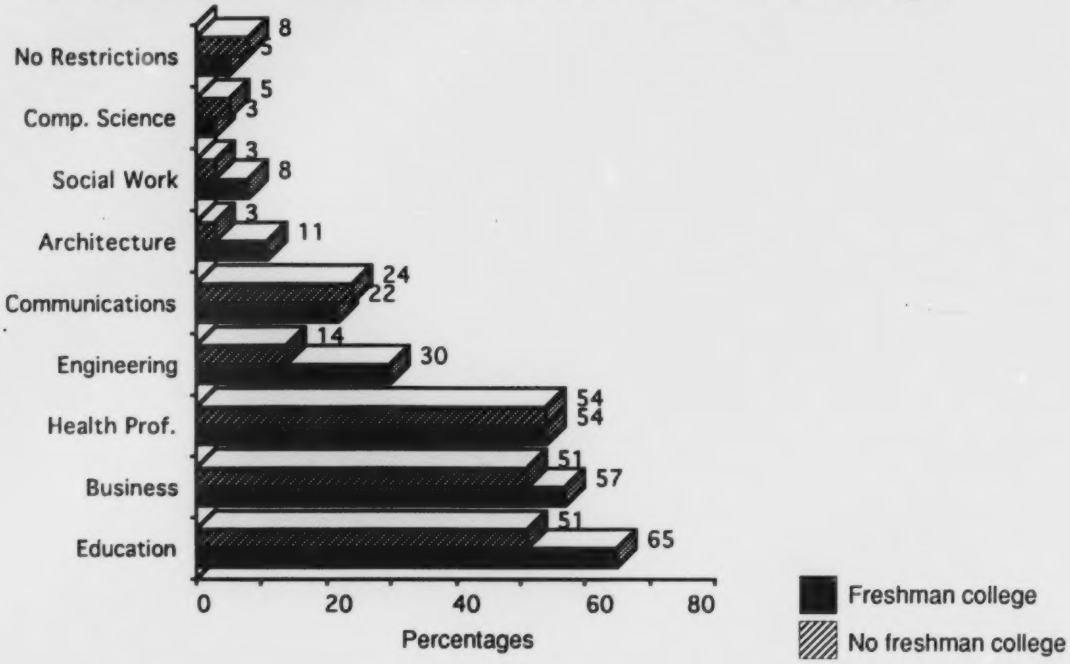


Figure 11

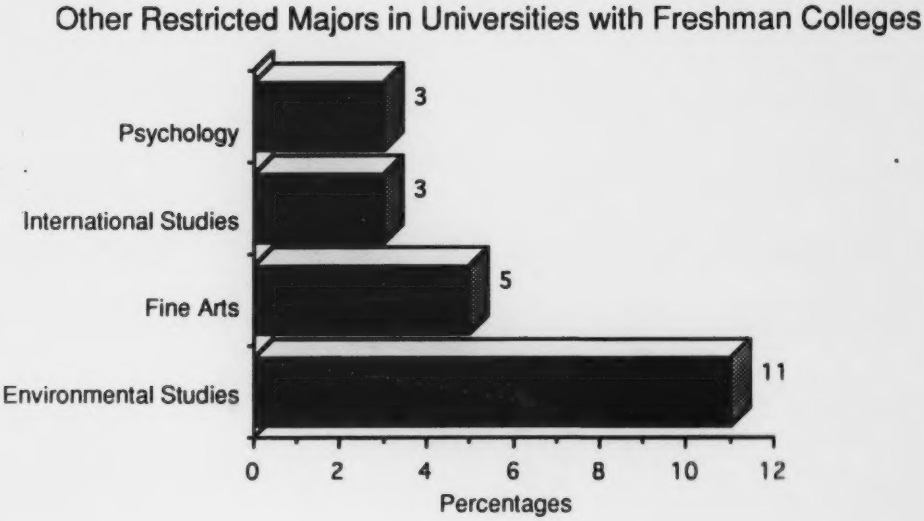


Figure 12

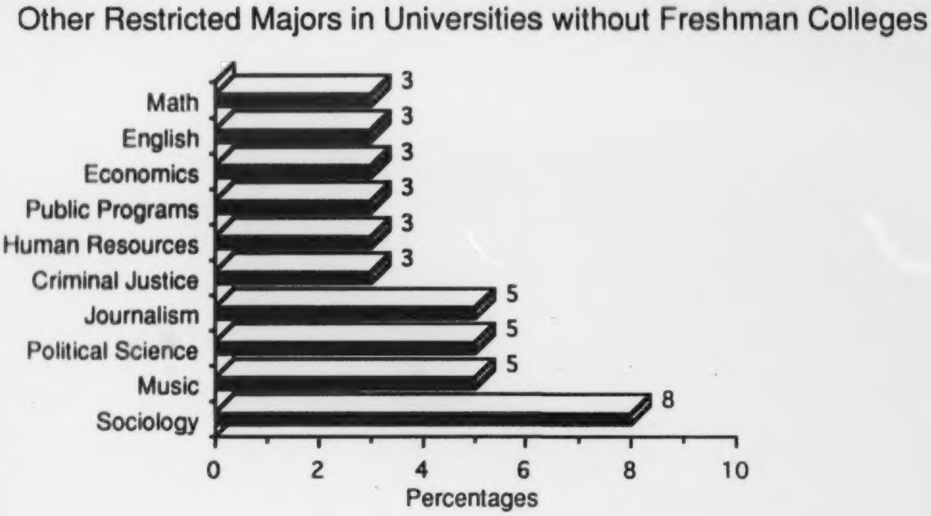
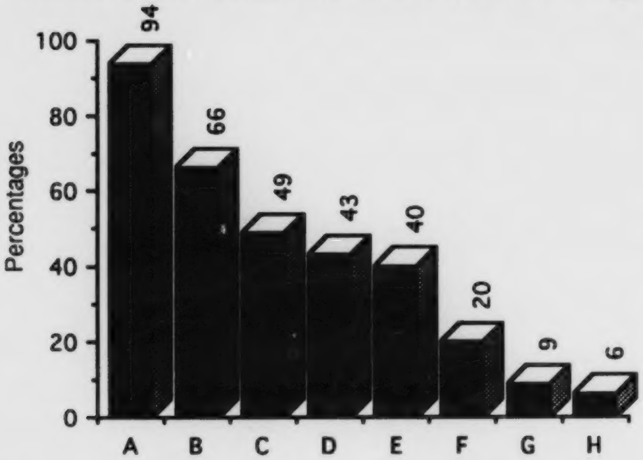


Figure 13

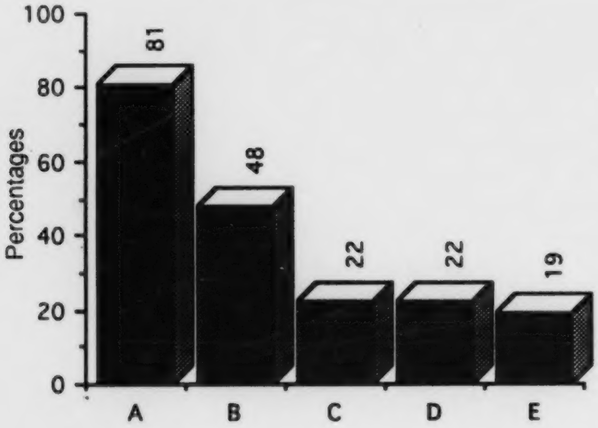
Freshman College Relationship to
the Core Curriculum/General Education Program



A = Advise students of curriculum options
B = Take part in institution oversight committee
C = Agitate for change
D = Provide program oversight (courses taught by other colleges/departments)
E = Assess program outcomes
F = Serve as interested bystander
G = Chair oversight committee
H = Deliver the program (hire or re-contract faculty and teach program)

Figure 14

Freshman College Relationship to the Freshman Seminar Program



A = Deliver the seminar
- •48% unit staff teach seminar
- •33% faculty hired or re-contracted to teach

B = Assess seminar outcomes
C = Provide program oversight
D = Chair institution oversight committee
E = Take part in institution oversight committee

Figure 15

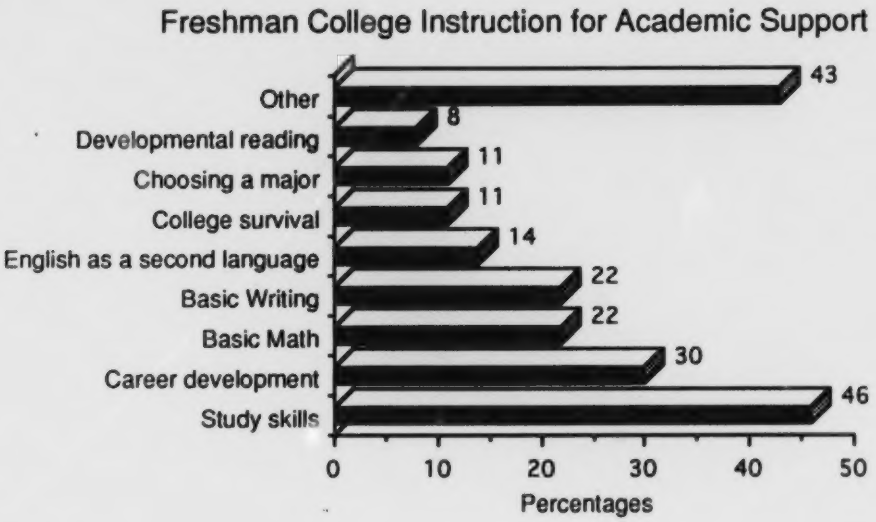
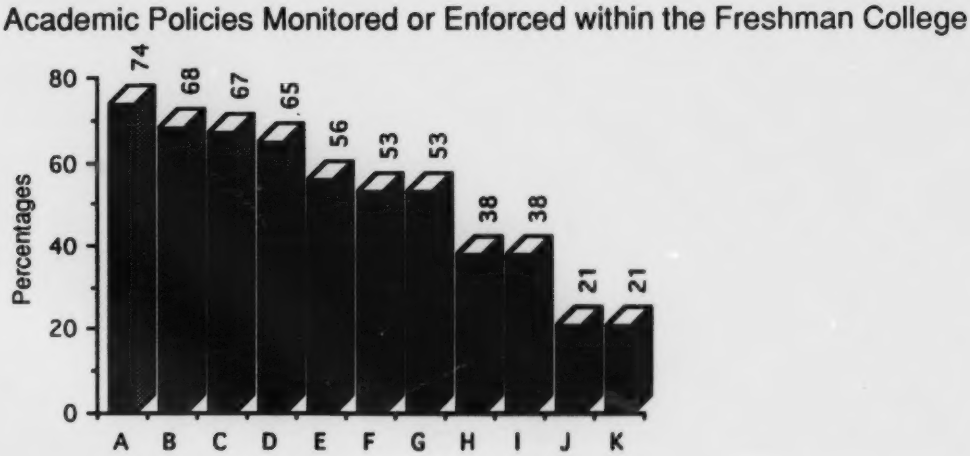


Figure 16



A = Appeals of dismissal
B = Appeal of drop/withdrawal deadline
C = Exceptions to degree requirements
D = Academic probation
E = Withdrawal from institution
F = Dismissal for academic failure
G = Readmission to the institution
H = Repeated course policy enforcement
I = Transcript evaluations
J = Completion of incomplete policy enforcement
K = Other

Figure 17

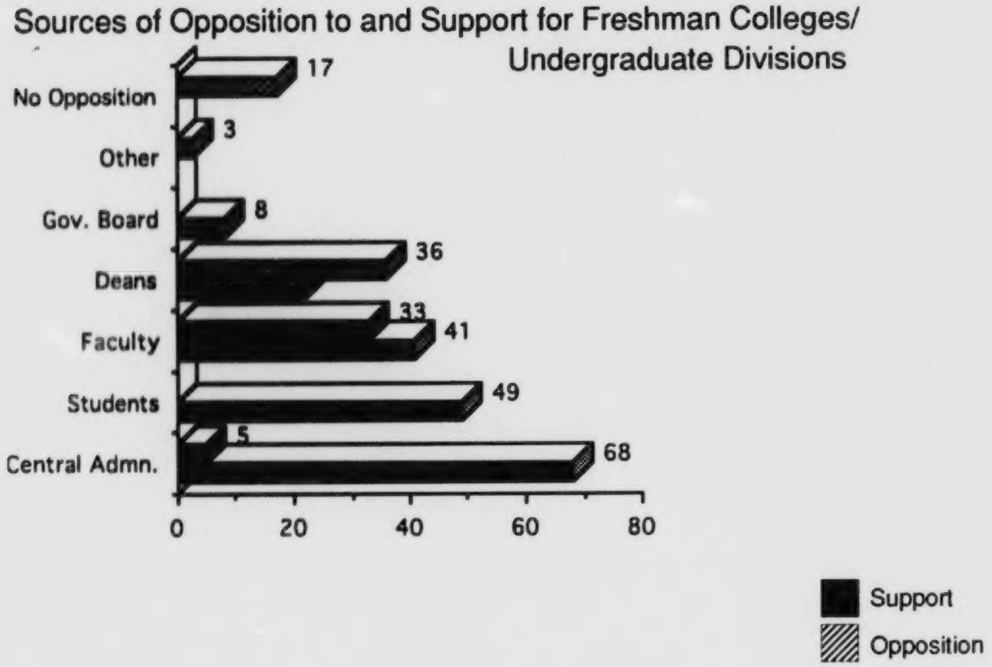
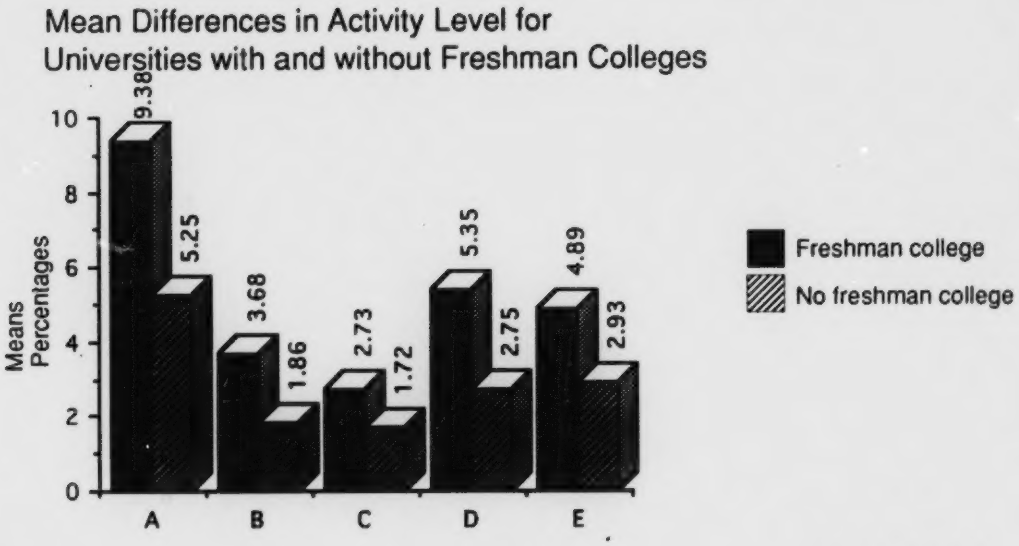

Sources of Opposition to and Support for Freshman Colleges/ Undergraduate Divisions

Figure 18


Mean Differences in Activity Level for Universities with and without Freshman Colleges

Activity	Means		Significance levels
	Freshman College	No Freshman College	
A = Number of groups affiliated with office	9.38	5.25	$p < .01$
B = Special groups receiving special services	3.68	1.86	$p < .01$
C = Forms that special services take	2.73	1.72	$p < .05$
D = Total advising office responsibilities	5.35	2.75	$p < .01$
E = Ways of monitoring advising quality	4.89	2.93	$p < .001$

Case Studies

Ohio University

Ball State University

The Pennsylvania State University

The Ohio State University

Butler University

University of Rhode Island

Alabama A & M University

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Chapter 2 – University College at Ohio University: An Historical Perspective

Samuel Crowl

Present Responsibilities

The University College at Ohio University is presently organized to have administrative responsibility for advising undecided freshmen (approximately 25% of an entering class of 3,000); supporting the work of the Advising Council which coordinates academic advising across the university's eight undergraduate colleges; providing special advising services for the university's non-traditional students; coordinating the university's core program in General Education; delivering tutoring services, reading and study skills courses, and other special programs through the Academic Advancement Center; organizing and delivering the summer precollege orientation program required of all new freshmen and transfer students; delivering the LINKS program, our major effort in improving the retention of minority students; creating, revising, and teaching the University Experience course taken by approximately 500 freshmen; supervising all Associate Degrees as well as baccalaureate programs in Specialized Studies and Criminal Justice; coordinating and directing a variety of programs and funds to aid teaching and learning which includes the University Professor Program, the university's major effort to honor outstanding teaching; designing and delivering special programs for students denied their first choice of a major; and providing an administrative home for Military Science and Aerospace Studies, the university's two ROTC programs.

Since Ohio University's University College was created in 1935, it has taken an interesting, but certainly not atypical, path to its present set of responsibilities; therefore, it may prove useful and illuminating to trace its history.

Origins

"New Deal for Freshmen at Ohio University" proclaimed the publicity which launched University College in the fall of 1935. The college was the brainchild of new president Herman Gerlach James who came to Ohio University from the presidency of the University of South Dakota in the summer of 1935 and immediately set his mark on the structure of the institution. James had degrees from Illinois (where his father, Edmund James, had served as president for sixteen years), Chicago, and Columbia. He had spent the early years of his career as a member of the government faculty at the University of Texas, moved on to serve as dean of College of Arts and Sciences at Nebraska before becoming president of South Dakota in 1929. James's academic background is important for it reveals his experience at a wide variety of public and private universities as well as a more personal understanding of the perils and possibilities of a university presidency.

When James arrived in Athens he set about a major reorganization of the university which was then composed of two colleges (Arts and

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Sciences and Education) and a School of Commerce. James created University College as the home for all freshmen, then elevated Commerce to college status, and spun off Music, Art, and Drama from Arts and Sciences to create the college of Fine Arts and Civil and Electrical Engineering from the department of Physics to create the College of Allied Sciences, the forerunner of our current College of Engineering and Technology. He also created a Graduate College. The structure James created is essentially the shape of the modern Ohio University as only four other colleges (Communication, Honors/Tutorial, Health and Human Services, and Osteopathic Medicine) have been added in the intervening 55 years.

National upheavals have often precipitated major changes in American higher education. The Morrill Act, establishing the land grant institutions, was passed as the Civil War raged. Immediately following the end of that conflict (1866) Andrew White created Cornell with a wide-open curriculum which featured degree options in vocational, professional, scientific, and applied studies as equal alternatives to the traditional classical curriculum. When Charles W. Eliot became president of Harvard in 1869 he followed White's lead by moving towards a system of universal free electives. By 1895 Eliot had managed to eliminate all general course requirements at Harvard except composition and modern foreign language.

World War I sparked the institution of Columbia's famous freshman core sequence focusing on Western Civilization, and the onset of the Great Depression led to Robert Hutchin's noted experiment in revising the structure and content of the entire undergraduate experience at the University of Chicago. Hutchin's rethinking of the relationship of the high school years to the university experience led to radical change at Chicago. While his specific reforms were not adopted elsewhere, they did lead several large Midwestern universities, such as Minnesota and Wisconsin, to create colleges focused on new approaches to educating freshmen in response to many of the same issues Hutchin was addressing in a different fashion at Chicago.

James's contribution to this movement was to focus University College exclusively on the freshman student and to see that the unit carried a designation which spoke to its university-wide set of responsibilities. James wrote the original prospectus for the college, which declared that the "University college at Ohio University is in essence simply a device by which . . . to accomplish more effectively . . . the instruction, direction, and guidance of Freshmen." James saw the college's essential purposes as threefold: 1) to ensure a proper foundation in general education, 2) to ensure that each student had proper faculty advice and guidance in making the transition from "the adolescent high school experience to the mature view-point of University life," and 3) to ensure that the freshman year was devoted to general intellectual training rather than to vocational pursuits.

James believed that the role of faculty advisors, or counsellors as he termed them, was essential to his plan. He understood that it was crucial for such faculty to be capable of "entering into personal friendship with and understanding of students, irrespective of the subjects the former teach, or the latter may have in mind to pursue." James perceived the single importance of the freshman year as a period when students "can outgrow not merely their scholastic imperfections but their emotional immaturities as well" and come to make "a deliberate and wisely directed choice as to what their future course of (study) should be."

James moved with a speed that would astound a modern president. He arrived on campus in July of 1935; University College was in place for freshmen who entered that fall and the other new colleges came on board in September of 1936. It will come as no surprise that the creation of University College was the most controversial element in James's ambitious reorganization of the University. Many faculty resented the speed with which James implemented his ideas, and others, particularly in the powerful College of Education, resented not having an immediate responsibility for the many students who entered the university intending to pursue a career in elementary or secondary school teaching. As the first goal of

University College was to ensure that, coupled with their high school work, all Ohio University students have a strong foundation in general education, James's plan also had the effect of creating a stronger set of university-wide general education requirements than previously existed. For those who persist in believing the myth that the past held a higher standard of high school graduation requirements than our own age, here are the standards set in 1935 by the Ohio State Department of Education for graduation from a four-year high school of the first grade:

Two units (years) of English
Two units of Social Studies
One unit of Natural Science
Two majors of three units each
Two minors of two units each.

Since state universities in Ohio were required to accept the graduates of accredited high schools James argued "that these requirements are so incredibly low that they would permit hopelessly unprepared students to present themselves for admission to the University, and we would have to take them." James proposed that students at the end of their freshman year at Ohio University, in conjunction with their work in high school, should have completed at least:

Five units of English
Three units of laboratory science
Three units of Social Studies
Two units of Mathematics
Two units of foreign language.

While these requirements bore some relationship to those in Arts and Sciences they differed significantly from those in Education. In both instances they proved difficult for many students to complete successfully in their freshman year, thus delaying their matriculation into a degree-granting college. Nevertheless, whatever the nature of faculty objections, whether procedural, territorial, or curricular, James's new college idea held, and by 1954 Thomas Hoover, writing the official history of the university to celebrate its sesquicentennial, could remark:

> Though James has been accused by some of a lack of tact, he can be praised for his foresight—University College proved an immediate success and even won national attention and acclaim. As this monograph goes to press it is approaching its twentieth year (Hoover, 1954, p. 221).

An interesting feature of the university college program was a one-hour course entitled "College Problems" required of all first-semester freshmen. Through large lectures and individual conferences this course functioned as a combined orientation program, introduction to the university, and advising/registration process. Several tests, including the College Ability Test, the Nelson-Denny Reading Test, and the Strong Vocational Interest Blank, were administered to all freshmen. The description of "College Problems" in the University catalog indicates that its purpose was to introduce students to their relationship to the university, their fellow students, extra-curricular activities and opportunities, social life, and life's work.

The principles undergirding "College Problems" clearly make it a forerunner of the contemporary freshmen orientation seminars which have sprouted across the country in the past decade. The course was coordinated and led by the Dean of Men and Dean of Women. It focused more on initiating new freshmen into the social rules and regulations of the university; it served less as an introduction to the intellectual demands and opportunities of university life. The course disappeared in 1946-47 when the first wave of returning veterans, rich with experience in the world's problems, flooded the university and drastically changed the dynamics of campus life.

Growth and Development

Hoover concluded his 1954 assessment of University College by observing: "There have been no radical changes in its organization since it was set up by James. Certainly there has been no relaxing of standards" (Hoover, 1954, p. 221). He was accurate on the first point, but on the latter he exaggerates. Even before the veterans poured back into the university, substantial modification in the freshman general education requirements had been making it easier for students to complete them in the freshman year. Requirements in science and language were greatly reduced or made more easy to fulfill based on student's high school work, and a required course in speech joined the two semesters of English Composition as the only specific course required of all students.

In the years between 1945 and 1965 the purpose and function of University College settled into a period of acceptance and routine. Faculty, in general, willingly assumed responsibility for freshman advising with new members of the faculty soon being recruited as freshman counsellors by the University College dean so as to emphasize that such service was an essential part of their responsibilities at the university.

The existence of a unit with university-wide responsibilities was immediately seen as attractive by subsequent leaders of the university. John C. Baker, who served as president from 1945-1962, reported that when he arrived on campus he was visited by several professors urging him to disband University College. "The nature of their objections to the idea of the college quickly led me to see its virtues," he remarked "and I believe it to be one of President James's finest legacies to Ohio University."

While the college's major focus remained on the traditional freshman student, it also became the home for the university's first two-year degree program, the Associate in Arts, established in 1949. Because of the university's relative isolation in the hills of Southeastern Ohio it had always maintained an active correspondence and extension division. Under Baker the extension division expanded through creation of a series of branch campuses located in the medium-sized cities ringing the region. Those campuses became the home of the majority of the university's general and technical associate degree programs.

University College, with its focus on the freshman student and the beginning undergraduate years, became the logical unit not only to house the few two-year degrees offered on the Athens campus but also to serve as the central monitoring office for the two-year degrees offered across the Ohio University system. In the years the Regional Campus system evolved from the late 1950s to the mid-1970s, the University College dean played a crucial role in the curricular development of their two-year degree programs. He was active in steering those programs through the university's Curriculum Council and the approval process at the state level established by the Board of Regents.

In this period of dramatic growth in state university systems University College proved to be a remarkably flexible administrative unit in addressing issues of access and opportunity as higher education moved from being a privilege for the few to a necessity for the many. By the mid-1970s Ohio University was offering over 12 individual two-year technical degree programs on its regional campuses, three such technical programs on the Athens campus, and the three general degrees (Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, and Associate in Individualized Studies) across all the campuses of the university. University College played a leading role in creating, coordinating, and monitoring much of that activity.

A second major addition to the college's set of responsibilities came in 1955 when the university established its first summer orientation program required for all freshmen. The program, established by President Baker and Dean Gaige Paulsen, has for over thirty-five years served as the academic introduction to the university for each year's freshmen and their parents. Precollege consists of fourteen sessions for freshmen and two for transfer and relocating students spread over a period from mid-July to mid-August. Each day approximately 220 students and their parents come to campus to participate in a program lasting just over twenty-four hours.

In that period students receive an orientation to the academic rules and expectations of the university, take placement tests in reading, writing, and mathematics to determine appropriate course placement in composition and quantitative reasoning, and register for classes for the fall quarter. Parents hear a general introduction to the university by the president or the dean of University College. Then they have an hour and a half session with the dean or assistant dean of their son or daughter's college, a session concentrating on curricular and academic rules and expectations. That session is followed by one of similar length with a student member of the precollege staff who also comes from their son's or daughter's college which focuses on the nature of the university from the student's perspective.

In the evening parents and students are reunited in a session which tries to look at the student's curricular options and opportunities for the entire freshman year rather than just the first quarter. The following morning, when the student is actually filling out a registration form for the first time, the parents are in a program led by the Dean of Students which features representatives from Housing, Residence Life, the Bursar's office, student activities and a host of other offices with which students, and often parents, have frequent contact. For those few students unable to come to campus in the summer, a modified orientation program is repeated on the weekend immediately preceding the opening of fall quarter.

Change and Transition

University College's exclusive focus on freshmen remained constant during the 1950s, but the period from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s found the college buffeted by dramatic changes, some of which it encouraged and welcomed, others of which were rather rudely thrust upon it.

Ohio University tripled in size (3000 - 9000) in the decade and a half following the end of World War II and then doubled that (9,000 - 18,000) in the decade of the 60s. A new president, Vernon Alden, very much associated with the Kennedy-esque spirit of the age, presided over a period of remarkable expansion of the University's physical plant—even arranging for the Army Corps of Engineers to move the Hocking River channel by more than a mile to create more space for development. Alden was also anxious to have the university seen as leading the way in educational reform. Impatient with the slow-moving pace of a curriculum structure dominated by the faculty and unable to move entrenched faculty by the same process he moved the Hocking River, he tried a different method of re-routing. Rather than attacking traditional units like the College of Arts and Sciences head-on, he mobilized a group of younger faculty—often spurred by the incipient student reform movement—to begin programs which by-passed existing college structures.

Under Alden a variety of special programs were established which allowed students to follow a non-traditional path to the baccalaureate degree. The most prominent and lasting was called The Cutler Program, which allowed the adventuresome undergraduate the opportunity to self-design his or her own program of study under the guidance of a faculty fellow. After several years this program was formalized as the Bachelor of General Studies Degree, the first such self-designed degree program to win approval from the Ohio Board of Regents.

The student protest movement of the late 1960s led to other major changes as well. One of the students' first demands was to abandon the university's requirement that all student registration forms carry the approval of each student's faculty advisor. The faculty rapidly—and gleefully—agreed, effectively ending what had been a mandatory program of faculty advising. Soon after, in 1969, the Faculty Senate also determined that the general education requirements, in place since James's original program was modified after World War II, were no longer relevant in the contemporary context. All university-wide general education requirements were abolished, including composition and public speaking.

By the time Alden's presidency ended in 1969 two of University College's prime original missions—faculty advising and general education—had been either undercut or eliminated. On the other hand, the college was being viewed as a creative agent for change by faculty interested in progressive ideas of educational reform which swept through campuses in that era. The college was assigned the responsibility for administering the Bachelor of General Studies degree (re-named the Bachelor of Specialized Studies in 1990 in response to the educational interests of another era) and also became responsible for administering the short-lived (1971-73) Residential-Experimental College. If the University college was pushed in the direction of radical change and reform by some, it was also given new responsibilities on the other end of the educational spectrum.

The university had sponsored Army and Air Force ROTC programs since the late 1930s. The programs had existed in administrative limbo for over thirty years supervised by a faculty coordinator who reported directly to the president. The programs, of course, became the target of student protests during the Vietnam war years. The protests reached their height in the aftermath of Nixon's bombing of Cambodia and the resulting shooting and killing of students by National Guardsmen at Jackson State and Kent State. A new president assigned administrative responsibility for the two ROTC units to the Dean of University College, and the college almost fractured from the tension created by its divided personality.

The final blow to its original identity as conceived by James also came as a result of the war. Both the colleges of Business Administration and Engineering and Technology declined in enrollment during the war years. Each believed that if it made an immediate claim on freshman students intending to major in one of its areas, its enrollment and retention would improve. As the university no longer had a set of common requirements for all freshmen—one of the key rationales for having a universal freshman college—little compelling argument could be mustered against moving to a system of direct entry. In 1973 University College ceased to be the universal freshman college. It remained the home for those freshmen who were undecided about a major, but they were advised by several professional counselors hired as permanent members of the University College staff rather than by faculty members.

The description of the College in the university's catalog for 1973-74 offers an honest assessment: "University College is in a stage of transition from being a college designed primarily to meet the needs of freshmen to a college which is concerned about all undergraduates." As indicated earlier, the college dean played an active role in this transition period by developing many of the two year Associate degree programs offered mainly on the regional campuses. He became an articulate champion and defender of the B.G.S. degree which drew fire from some faculty as the reform spirit and momentum of the 1960s began to fade. He tried to keep alive the potential of the college as a change agent in undergraduate education but was hampered by the failure of the Residential-Experimental College which gave "experiment" a bad name on campus. He attempted to put into place a series of innovative freshman interdisciplinary courses, in many instances offered in the residence halls. Several such courses were given each year, but once again, as the reform movement of the 60s withered, it became more difficult to attract faculty to create and teach these offerings as well as students to take them. One of the aims of these courses had been to introduce students to a new concept of education which tried to merge living and learning in unusual combinations rather than to present a particular set of readings arranged around an inviting or challenging topic.

When faculty and student interest in these unique seminars began to fade, the idea of a special course for freshmen was re-imagined as "U.C. 115: The University Experience." Launched in 1977, the University Experience course was an interesting variation of "College Problems" abandoned thirty years ago. Becoming the responsibility of the University College staff to organize, revise, and teach in conjunction with volunteers from other areas of the university, the course is currently taken by approximately 500 freshmen out of a class of 3,000 and is Ohio University's major curricular contribution to the freshman experience movement.

In the period from 1972-1975 for a variety of reasons the university experienced an enrollment decline almost as severe as, and certainly more dislocating than, its rapid expansion in the 1960s. Loss of state subsidy and tuition dollars and the resultant institutional infighting which followed naturally put an end to any ambitious plans to re-define the University College's mission. Two important programs had been added to the college's responsibilities before the enrollment collapse, however, and they were preserved even in the face of the ensuing budgetary reductions: the University Professor Program and the Experimental Education Fund.

The University Professor Program is now entering its twenty-second year. Each year, through an elaborate selection process, the undergraduate students select six professors to be honored for their outstanding teaching and their creative ideas about additions to the curriculum. The six are named University Professors for the succeeding year and are allowed to teach two University Professor courses of their own creation during that academic year. Ideas for these courses are discussed by the faculty finalists with members of the selection committee so that students have a direct hand not only in recognizing fine teaching but in curricular innovation as well. Though met with initial skepticism by many faculty when launched in 1970, the University Professor Program is now regarded as one of the university's most prized traditions. University College has coordinated the program from its inception and has used it to build the reputation for concern about excellent teaching across the campus.

The Experimental Education Fund was also created in response to the reform energies of the 1960s. It provides modest grants to professors who want to try out new ideas with existing courses or with the implementation of innovative new offerings. These funds have allowed University College to provide seed monies to professors across the university interested in improving undergraduate education.

By 1975 the Faculty Senate was busy reversing or tightening many of the liberal academic policies they had created in the 1960s. Gone was the ABC grading policy for freshmen (Fs were automatically removed from the student's record, and he or she could petition to remove Ds—a policy that still exists at several universities, including Stanford, where it obviously had a more beneficial impact than at Ohio University). The Faculty Senate tightened the policy on taking courses on a Pass/Fail basis and began debate about reinstituting a set of common degree requirements for all undergraduates.

At first the issue got sidetracked in a political battle between Arts and Sciences and the professional colleges. The new president, Charles Ping, who came to the university in 1975, was passionately interested in the issue of general education and managed to refocus the debate by indicating that a prime faculty responsibility was to set degree requirements. Further, it was important for the faculty to determine if Ohio University was one university or simply a cluster of colleges which shared a common landscape. He also arranged for a study team to attend the Lilly Foundation Workshop on Liberal Studies held every summer at Colorado College to draft a report to the faculty on General Education.

In the spring of 1979 the Senate passed a new set of General Education requirements for all undergraduates based on the Lilly team's report. These requirements were arranged in three stages or tiers: Basic Skills, Breadth of Knowledge, and Synthesis, spreading out work in the core from the freshman to the senior year. The plan was implemented over a period of several years with the final tier (synthesis) becoming a graduation requirement for students entering in the fall of 1983.

Grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), which supported summer faculty seminars to develop the senior-level, interdisciplinary synthesis courses, were crucial in the program's success. Although to some the synthesis requirement smacked of the experiments of the 1960s, the support from noted external funding agencies and the participation of many of the university's most productive faculty in the summer seminars worked to reduce skepticism about the requirement and to ensure the quality of the synthesis courses which emerged from the seminars. In 1990 the General Education Program won a highly competitive Program Excellence Award from the Ohio Board of Regents.

At the same time the Senate was reinstituting a universal program in General Education, another committee of faculty and administrators, appointed by the Provost, was at work creating ideas for restructuring or consolidating areas of the university with an eye on efficiency and cost-savings. University College came under intense scrutiny by that group, and proposals emerged to fold its responsibilities either into the College of Arts and Sciences or under the Dean of Students office. Neither idea was adopted.

The final report recommended instead that University College remain while modifying its present set of responsibilities in three significant ways. University College would have the administrative support responsibilities for General Education; it would follow the rest of the university in returning to an active role for faculty in advising; and it would shift curricular responsibility for the associate degree programs to the regional campuses where they were delivered.

Synthesis

The decade of the 1980s has been a period of synthesis for the college. It returned to its roots by recreating a program of faculty advising for University College freshmen and by accepting administrative responsibility for supporting faculty advising efforts across the university. The University College played an active role in implementing the new program in general education and in building upon the university-wide programs for teaching and learning, which were added to the college's mission in the 1970s.

As the 1980s began, a new dean was appointed who had been active in the Faculty Senate debate and subsequent formulation of the new core requirements. He was firm in the belief that faculty should play a crucial role as mentors to the nature of academic life, and thus he welcomed the return to a system of faculty responsibility for freshman advising. He also was a strong advocate for the educational value of the senior-level Tier III courses and saw their development as a way of placing University College's concern for innovative curricular programs in the mainstream of the undergraduate experience at Ohio University.

Another important area of college responsibility had also been developed in the 1970s and expanded in the 1980s. In 1971 the Ohio Board of Regents began to award special line-item funding to universities to establish programs in tutoring and developmental education. Again the administration turned to University College to create a center charged with providing such services to students. An active Student Development Center was created (later renamed The Academic Advancement Center) which grew to serve not only as a tutoring center, but also to include a writing clinic, a math clinic, to offer courses in study skills and reading comprehension and to house the College Adjustment Program (CAP) funded through the federal government's TRIO program. The Center is centrally located in Alden Library and includes a director and a staff of eight. State funding for such centers peaked in 1980 and has been cut by almost 90 percent over the course of the decade. The college and the university have both contributed to maintain and even enhance the Center's budget and responsibilities. The Center's activities, particularly the CAP program, are all associated with helping students master the intellectual and personal skills which will enable them not only to survive but to thrive at the university.

Another important retention effort established by the college in the 1980s is the LINKS program for minority freshmen. In an effort to improve minority retention rates, particularly for African-American freshmen, the Associate Dean of the college created a program with two main components. The first consists of a special orientation program held on the weekend preceding the first day of precollege to provide minority students with unique perspectives on life in a large residential university situated in a small rural community 65 miles from the nearest city. The second phase of the program links several new minority freshmen with a successful upperclass minority student who acts as a mentor during the freshman year. CAP, LINKS, and the University Experience course are the college's major formal contributions to the University's retention efforts, though the reestablished faculty advising system has also contributed to the significant improvement in the university's retention rates during the 1980s.

In the decade of the '80s the University's freshman-to-sophomore-retention rate has improved from 68% to 85% for all students and from 47% to 80% for minority freshmen. Applications for a freshman class of 3,000 students have increased from 6,500 to 10,500. Several colleges and programs (Business, Journalism, and Engineering) have had to create selective admissions standards more stringent than those for the university as a whole. Once again University College has proved to be an effective vehicle for housing and advising those freshmen with academic credentials strong enough for admission to the university but not strong enough to allow them to enter their first choice of college or major directly. Over the last decade the ACT composite score for the freshman class has risen from 19 to 23; the SAT composite from 850 to 1050; and the median class rank from the 58th percentile to the 75th. A constant entering freshman class of 3,000 and retention efforts over the decade, coupled with the increasing academic strength of the freshmen, has produced an undergraduate enrollment increase from 13,500 to 15,500 at Ohio University with the total enrollment in the fall of 1991 exceeding that of 1971 when the enrollment slide began. This improvement has been a university-wide effort, but University College has certainly played a central role in its achievement.

Finally, University College has attempted to expand its role in encouraging and rewarding excellent teaching. In mid-decade it launched two new programs to address that issue: (a) the Colloquium on Teaching and (b) the Teaching Fund. The Colloquium on Teaching each year brings together fifteen interested faculty from colleges and departments across the university to talk about teaching. At a two hour luncheon meeting every other week from January through May they hear brief presentations from colleagues who have been recognized for outstanding teaching, share examples of their own successes and failures, discuss texts like Eble's *The Craft of Teaching* and teaching tips presented in journals like *The Teaching Professor*. Most participants indicate that the colloquium is the first extended opportunity to talk about teaching they have experienced, and many return to their departments and schools to launch similar efforts there.

The Teaching Fund makes competitive grants of $1,000 to ten faculty each year based on proposals which address ways of improving their effectiveness as teachers. In writing their proposals, faculty are asked to include evidence from student or department evaluations that suggest needed improvements in their teaching. Faculty are then required to present a plan to adapt their teaching style or course content to the perceived insufficiency. The Teaching Fund builds on the success of the Experimental Education Fund and the Summer Tier III course development seminars in providing faculty with monetary support and encouragement for being actively engaged with curriculum reform and teaching improvement.

Conclusion

In its over fifty-five years of history at Ohio University, University College has proved to be a remarkably flexible administrative unit. It has met the changing academic needs of undergraduate students while also addressing the ever-changing, though often cyclical, academic imperatives of each age. As the last decade has refocused the academic community's attention on the crucial nature of the freshman year and on the resulting issues of retention, advising, and assessment, it should perhaps come as little surprise that university colleges and units with other titles but similar responsibilities have gained new credence and importance in the structure of many universities.

Chapter 3 – The Retention of Students: University College at Ball State

Barbara Weaver

Introduction: Retention Issues

After unprecedented growth in the number and size of higher education institutions in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s, census data in the 1970s projected a sharp decline in the numbers of eighteen-year-old high school graduates available to fill freshman classrooms of the next decade. In 1979, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education predicted a decline of 15% to 20% of Indiana high school graduates during the 1980s, a circumstance they feared would decrease the number of the state's undergraduates by 20,000 from 1981 to 1986. Faced with the prospect of empty classrooms and fiscal plans gone awry, college and university administrators began to look anew at an old phenomenon—that only about half of all students who enter higher education eventually earn baccalaureate degrees. The National Institute of Independent Colleges and Universities reports degree completion in six years for only 40% of students who became full-time students at a four-year college or university directly after high school (Porter, 1990).

Ball State University, historically a teachers' college which became a university in 1965, has always placed a high value on its teaching mission and the quality of undergraduate education. Nevertheless, a retention study based on the matriculating class of 1974 revealed a five-year baccalaureate degree completion rate of 46% after five years, with another 7% of the cohort still enrolled. In truth, enrollment did not decline at Ball State during the 1970s—the institution grew from 17,200 students in 1974 to 17,500 in 1979. The 1979 projections, however, forecast an enrollment of only 15,300 for the fall of 1989.

Remarkably, the actual enrollment at Ball State for 1989-90 was 18,993, and by 1991-92 the institution reached an oversubscribed size of 20,500. Applications for admission rose from 6,400 to 9,300 between 1984 and 1991, the academic potential of students as measured by SAT scores and high school performance continues to improve, and the retention of students from the first to the second year has increased from 67% to 77% in the last five years. University college played a major role in achieving this improvement in retention and quality.

While market considerations initially provided the impetus for improving retention, improving quality became an equally important consideration in 1979 when the president convened a university task force to study student retention at Ball State and to recommend a comprehensive plan for improvement. The task force recommended paying greater attention to students' experience in the freshman year, personalizing academic advising (especially for students undecided about a major), improving academic support for students academically at-risk, and reconstructing the general studies component of the curriculum. Having surveyed faculty, students, and administrators, the task force acknowledged disagreement with the university's plans to improve retention and some disgruntlement about the academic preparation of students. But the conclusions of the task force have guided the comprehensive planning for improved retention in the ensuing years:

> We conclude that improvement in student retention can come about only if the university, in all its diverse and sometimes competitive components, will recognize the common good which a sensible retention program can affect. . . . We acknowledge that . . . attrition must follow from other university activities, not dictate them. High retention rates and good academic soundness are not incompatible, but the goal must always be a university filled with articulate, competent, concerned individuals, even if, at the last, it must be, in Milton's words, "fit company, though few."

These principles guided the planning for a University College at Ball State which opened in September, 1985.

Creating a University College

In 1980, when the Task Force on Retention highlighted the advising system as a focus for improvement, a staff of full-time professional advisors provided all curricular advising to Ball State students. Each advisor was responsible for as many as 1,200 students. Faculty members had no formal advising responsibilities, and advising focused on course selection, change of schedule, and meeting programmatic requirements. Students who matriculated without declaring a major were particularly at risk of attrition in that system.

Although an academic opportunity program already provided counseling and basic skills classes for students admitted to the university "on warning," the task force proposed a tutoring center to assist a broader range of students in their freshman year of studies. Based upon these recommendations, the university developed a plan to develop a University College which would be responsible for academic advising and developmental education support services for all matriculating students. As the plans became concrete, Ball State requested new program funds from the Indiana General Assembly for 1985-87, intending to inaugurate the University College in autumn of 1985.

When the state legislature chose not to fund University College, the provost and president implemented a modified plan by reallocating internal resources. A dean, a Learning Center director, an academic assessment specialist, three faculty coordinators, and six academic advisors were hired or reassigned to University College. Among the 3,600 new matriculates to Ball State University in autumn 1985, 882 were assigned to University College—555 students who did not declare a major and 327 admitted "on warning" to the university. University College academic advisors had a case load of fewer than 150 students each.

Operationally, the early University College was problematic. University College (UC) advisors still reported to the director of academic advising who did not report to the University College dean. Graduate assistants were selected and paid by academic departments. Learning Center coordinators had dual appointments in their academic departments and in the college. Decisions about job assignments, performance evaluation, and salaries were complicated. The UC dean spent much time negotiating with departments about the workloads of faculty who were trying to create new programs in UC while trying to fulfill the traditional academic requirements for teaching and research. Even to deal with a graduate assistant's unsatisfactory work required a conference and a paper trail; routine administrative tasks became complex.

University College also met with considerable resistance on campus. Students and faculty perceived the plan as an open door for students who did not belong at Ball State; the student press editorialized under headlines of "You Kollege—Ball State's answer to quality ejucashun" and "Academic Generation Gap," a piece that began, "For better or worse, University College is here to stay—hopefully not for long." In the opinion of the *Daily News*, "University College students should not go through four years of school to waste taxpayers' money and educators' time." The six degree programs had lost $200,000 in academic affairs funds to finance the program. At that time, moreover, the Indiana Commission on Higher Education went public with a plan to eliminate so-called remedial programs at state-assisted four-year institutions.

University College could never have succeeded amid these criticisms without the president's and provost's determined commitment to its goals. They believed its basic plan to improve advising, academic support, and student assessment was sound. Within months of University College's opening, the climate changed. The headlines now read "U-college: New Program Offers a Chance to Those Who Only Need One" and "U-college Measures Success in Students." In the Learning Center, students encountered empathic, skilled, and accessible peer tutors. They appreciated their advisors' personal interest and attention, and they responded to the many opportunities for workshops and discussions of time management and career planning. The program began to thrive despite its weak structure, a negative campus climate, underfunding, and an unsympathetic state leadership because it was the right idea at the time for Ball State University.

Accumulating and publishing data about University College's work have fostered its subsequent growth and development. From the beginning, the College has maintained careful, systematic records of advising contacts and Learning Center attendance coupled with longitudinal studies of its students' academic performance and progress towards a degree. Even after one year, it was obvious that the investment of limited resources into University College paid off in improved academic performance and increased student persistence.

Individual success stories are compelling. Consider Jama, an eighteen year-old matriculate who presented a combined SAT of only 550 and ranked barely at the median of her large high school class. Jama placed heavy demands on her academic advisor and sought tutoring in three of her first-semester classes. Even as a junior, Jama attended the Learning Center for thirty-four hours and took a supplemental instruction section of geography. With this assistance, however, and by attending some summer sessions, Jama completed her bachelor of science degree in four years with a grade-point average of 3.1 on a 4.0 scale.

Despite original skepticism, the state legislature ultimately supported the University College concept by funding the complete revision of academic advising during 1987-89. Gradually, University College acquired the resources for an independent staff. In 1990, the academic affairs division was reorganized, bringing Academic Advising and the Center for Teaching and Learning into University College. This decision streamlined the organizational structure, assigned all the freshmen to University College, and formally extended the College's outreach to faculty, especially those teaching in the general studies curriculum.

University College Today: A Description

Under the leadership of John E. Worthen, who assumed the presidency of Ball State University in 1984, the university has refocused its mission as a "comprehensive, publicly assisted institution of higher education whose mission is to provide excellent education. . . . Ball State offers more varied academic programs than the small liberal arts college while providing a more personalized educational experience than may be found at a large research-oriented university. . . . Ball State University will continue to strive to be a premier teaching institution offering, at a reasonable cost, instruction and scholarly inquiry of high quality within an environment that emphasizes personal attention."

University College works to help realize that mission. Just as each University College seems tailored to fit the unique organizational structure and curricular practices of each institution, so several important features of Ball State's operations contribute to the shape and mission of its University College. The university is organized into six degree-granting colleges: Applied Sciences and Technology, Architecture and Planning, Business, Fine Arts, Sciences and Humanities, and Teacher's College. University College is one of several special-purpose academic affairs units also headed by deans, including the Graduate School, the School of Continuing Education and Public Service, University Libraries, and Honors College. University College does not have a faculty, does not grant degrees, and does not offer a curriculum. It is a co-curricular academic affairs structure.

In most cases, new Ball State students may declare a major and enter the college of their choice upon matriculation. About one-third of the freshmen choose not to declare a major; others must fulfill certain requirements before being granted admission to their chosen degree program. Students cannot immediately become majors in business or telecommunications, for example, but may declare a "pre" major in those areas. Admission to the College of Architecture and Planning is very competitive and requires a secondary admissions application. Ball State, nevertheless, is not dominated by its collegiate structure; the curriculum is markedly open to students in comparison with many other universities. Regardless of their college of major, all freshmen are advised in University College. Many freshmen are thus concurrently enrolled in a degree and University College, a circumstance that is not possible on many campuses.

Ball State's curricular structure also differs from that of most public institutions of its size. All baccalaureate degrees in all colleges require completion of the 42 semester hour General Studies program. This program-in-common includes 15 hours of core courses (two semesters of a freshman composition and one semester each of mathematics, speech, and western civilization), 27 hours in six distribution areas, each with a focused, limited list of choices, and a junior-level writing competency examination. Associate degree programs require a similar, though smaller, general studies component. University College does not manage General Studies but works closely with academic affairs administrators who do. Four of six colleges contribute classes to General Studies with most originating in the College of Sciences and Humanities.

These two features of Ball State University (i.e., the ability to be enrolled in both University College and the degree college and the common General Studies curriculum) have much to do with how the University College was conceived, how it works, and how it has evolved.

University College serves students in various ways throughout their academic career, although we pay particular attention to students in their first year of study and to the quality of teaching and learning in the General Studies curriculum. University College is composed of three departments—Academic Advising, the Learning Center, and the Center for Teaching and Learning—and the dean's office, which coordinates research, planning, and some services. Most UC programs involve the collaborative efforts of its departments; therefore, it is helpful to look at UC through both organizational and programmatic lenses.

University College Departments

The office of Academic Advising, headed by a director and staffed with twenty-five twelve-month, full-time professional advisors, assists students in making progress toward meeting their academic goals. Recognizing that the needs of freshmen are substantially different from those of upperclassmen, Ball State offers comprehensive and personal advising for first-year students, with focused, departmental advising for students with thirty hours of credit or more. University College directly advises all students until they achieve sophomore status and declare a major. The director of academic advising coordinates and facilitates faculty advising of upperclassmen, as well as freshmen advising.

UC's advising model is developmental and intrusive, designed to help students accomplish the transition from high school or the work place in the most comprehensive way while addressing their academic, social, and emotional concerns, struggles, triumphs, and tribulations.

For these reasons, students often maintain a friendship with their UC advisor after they move on to faculty advising. Martha, for example, needed considerable empathy and encouragement even before her matriculation in the fall of 1988 at age 38. A single parent on welfare, a high school dropout and former substance abuser, Martha had little self-esteem even after earning a GED with assistance from vocational rehabilitation counselors. When she came timidly to University College to inquire about admission, she was taken under the wing of a skilled advisor who helped her enroll and register, sent her to the Learning Center, and met frequently with her to supply moral support and a sympathetic ear. Now in her fourth year, Martha recently stopped in to see her former UC advisor. She will complete a Bachelor of Science degree in Pre-professional psychology this spring and hopes to enter graduate school with her 3.21 grade point average and a confident performance on the Graduate Record Exam.

Each advisor in the freshman unit is now responsible for 325-350 students, including some who are academically at-risk and some who are undecided. Advisors have found this load to be manageable, although a much lower student/advisor ratio would be necessary if all advisees needed special services. Specialist advisors work with intercollegiate athletes, disabled students, and freshmen enrolled in the Honors College. Advisors maintain contact with their freshmen through scheduled appointments, walk-in hours, telephone, mail, and group meetings. Freshmen are required to meet with their advisor at least once each semester; like Martha, however, most students see their advisor more frequently.

Students who have completed 30 credit hours but have not chosen a major remain in University College, where they are assigned to advisors who specialize in career exploration and can help students consider their options and make wise choices. There is no particular point in time at which students must choose their major; professional assistance is available as long as students need it. In University College, students may undertake a systematic search of their preferences, talents, and abilities, and learn about compatible career options. Advisors and Learning Center staff offer interest and aptitude testing, assessment of learning styles and personality type, computer-assisted career exploration searches such as SIGI or GIS, consultations on career choices and related educational paths, opportunities to consult with academic departments and/or working professionals, and referral to other campus resources, including Career Services and Counseling and Psychological Services.

Students who have completed 30 hours and have chosen a major are advised by faculty in their department. Faculty advisors provide program-specific, specialized information that students need once they are committed to a field of study. To facilitate faculty advising, University College maintains six advising resource centers in various areas of the campus—each staffed with a full-time professional advisor and secretary. The resource center coordinators transfer student records from freshman advising to the departments, train new faculty advisors, provide curricular and advising information to faculty, assess transcripts for transfer credit, perform graduation audits for all students, and generally assist students and faculty through the advising process. Academic departments assign advisors according to their preference. In some departments, all faculty members advise. In others, a few volunteers fulfill the advisor's role. A few departments with a particularly heavy advising load have added a full-time faculty advisor. All faculty advising is assigned and paid for by the academic departments.

Through University College, then, academic advising at Ball State is a campus-wide program that offers a high level of general support to students who are starting their college work, and it progresses to a more specialized service for students who have been successful and have made academic commitments.

While academic advising is one important component in a comprehensive academic support system, many students also need—and almost all can benefit from—assistance in acquiring, refining, and applying the skills and habits associated with active learning. To this end, the Learning Center offers all Ball State students free peer tutoring in reading, study skills, mathematics, writing, and in most classes that constitute the general studies curriculum like the introductory courses in sciences, humanities, fine arts, global studies, and social sciences. Four professional coordinators with faculty backgrounds in varied disciplines, assisted by sixteen graduate assistants and about 120 undergraduate tutors, conduct this highly successful program which is open 58 hours per week and serves 5000 students each year. In addition to supporting the general studies curriculum, the Learning Center provides systematic developmental assistance in mathematics and reading. For example, the mathematics coordinator coaches students for the mathematics placement exam, conducts workshops in math anxiety, and works with Continuing Education to offer noncredit courses in basic algebra. The Learning Center makes available up-to-date computer equipment in two laboratories, uses Ball State's Video Information System for small group instruction and classroom review, and houses other learning technologies, including adaptive equipment for disabled students.

The Learning Center provides Supplemental Instruction (SI) in selected general studies class sections. In a Supplemental Instruction class section, trained advanced undergraduate students serve as SI leaders who attend each class session, take notes, and hold voluntary small group study sessions outside of class. These SI student leaders use collaborative learning to develop study strategies, promote group discussion, and help students learn questioning and review techniques. Based on the SI program developed at the University of Missouri at Kansas City, SI consistently has been found to reduce attrition rates, improve academic performance, and increase critical thinking skills for participants (Martin, Arendale, & Associates, 1992). The Learning Center's supplemental instruction program was offered to 2968 students enrolled in general studies classes during fall 1991, with 1183 students attending SI sessions. Three of these classes—economics, geography, and western civilization—were offered at remote sites through Indiana's higher education television network. In the distance-learning SI program, weekly study sessions are held in the distance-learning classroom on campus and telecast simultaneously to off-campus sites, where students may participate in the study sessions associated with their television classes. Ball State University has now offered "SI on TV" for two years.

About 4,000 students each year (20% of the total student body) attend the Learning Center for tutoring and SI for more than 20,000 hours of contact. More than 1,000 others take part in workshops and review sessions. Of the final course grades associated with peer tutoring, 82% are passing grades and more than two thirds are grades of "C" or better.

Through academic advising and the Learning Center, students receive assistance in meeting the expectations of faculty. This work is enriched by the Center of Teaching and Learning which enhances the learning environment for students by also providing services to faculty. Managed by a full-time director who is also a tenured faculty member, the Center offers individual faculty members opportunities to improve their teaching and to explore pedagogical issues. Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) programs include a semester-long teaching seminar for new faculty, a video consultation service, the Teaching Improvement Process for mid-semester evaluation, assistance in developing teaching portfolios, and a lecture series on teaching. A resource center for the study of teaching and learning is housed in the CTL. The application of technology to teaching is a particular strength of the CTL, and faculty receive help in preparing to use integrated information systems, interactive computer instruction, and other types of instructional technology.

This skeleton review of the University College structure offers only glimpses of its programmatic efforts, most of which are collaborative undertakings that cross departmental lines and involve faculty and staff in units external to UC. Each of the programs described below has evolved as the UC staff identify areas of concern and seek new opportunities to improve students' success.

University College Programs

Guided Studies offers a structured program of academic guidance for the first-year students identified during the admissions process as needing extra academic attention. Typically, these are students with SAT scores below 800 or high school rank below the top half or whose high school curriculum has academic gaps. Between 350 and 600 students in Guided Studies each year receive intrusive advising, placement in general studies courses that offer supplemental instruction, and extra outreach efforts from the Learning Center.

Project Start, a five-week summer residential program for Indiana students who have demonstrated academic potential but do not meet the criteria for admission to Ball State University, has two primary objectives: (a) to provide Indiana residents with more access and opportunity for higher education and (b) to make that access meaningful through a comprehensive program of regular college classes with an array of social and recreational programs. Students who successfully complete the program earn admission to the fall class at the university.

Reflex, a communications network designed to make the university "flexible" in meeting the needs of students engaged in nontraditional patterns of study (such as students who study part-time or do not enter directly from high school), features a central information center in University College and a decentralized staff. The center provides a point of contact between nontraditional students and university offices. A full-time coordinator offers planning sessions, referrals to other university offices, and information to students.

PACE *(Partnership for Academic Commitment to Excellence)* constitutes a support service network for freshmen who are on academic probation after their first semester at Ball State. Students in PACE enter into a contract with their academic advisor stipulating the steps they will take to improve academic performance, such as attending the Learning Center, taking a reading or study skills class, cutting back on work hours, or enrolling in time management or other workshops. Academic advisors see their PACE students at least four times during the semester.

Academic Support for Intercollegiate Athletes is coordinated by University College at Ball State University. The athletic advising resource center, two freshman advisors, the academic development coordinator and the coordinator of athletic tutoring services work closely with each other and the coaching staffs in men's and women's athletics to offer a comprehensive program of orientation to college study, curricular advising, supervised study tables, peer tutoring, and personal counseling to help athletes meet the rigorous demands of their academic and athletic schedules.

Program Assessment activities include retention studies, student evaluation of all University College services, studies of Learning Center attendance and associated academic performance, and participation in the national data collection for Supplemental Instruction. A major research effort is currently underway with plans to seek external funding for qualitative research into the learning that takes place in study groups.

Additional programs include faculty-tracking (a service to link faculty and advisors for academic intervention), Shopping Cart (an annual fair for undecided students), the Senior VIP Connection (linking undecided sophomores to seniors who are very informed persons in their major field), and a host of collaborative programs between University College personnel and Student Affairs.

One of University College's primary roles at Ball State is to provide the academic affairs link with the division of student affairs. Since 1985, the UC dean and the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs have co-chaired a university-wide committee on the freshman year experience, whose mission is to attend to the experiences of Ball State undergraduates during their first year on campus, including the quality of general education, the quality of student life, the general climate for first-year students, and policy issues that affect freshmen.

Most recently, at UC's request, the University Senate has created a University College subcommittee of the undergraduate education committee. Composed of faculty members, this committee advises the dean, reviews and recommends UC programs and policies, and helps make known to faculty the nature and value of University College's contribution to the academic mission.

Conclusions

University College at Ball State University has demonstrated that it is possible to improve student retention markedly over time. Our experience, however, suggests that improving retention requires reforming the campus culture: the value of each individual learner must be explicit in the institutional mission, in faculty attitudes, in university offices, in residential life, in academic advising and in academic support services. Better retention means admitting students who are likely to succeed, identifying those who will be likely to need additional attention, and re-thinking at every opportunity who is "at-risk."

Improved retention is a by-product of a university's mission statement, its allocation of resources to support its mission, its attitudes about students, and its leadership. University College programs are key features of Ball State University's mission to be a premier teaching university. The University College model has enabled Ball State to consolidate resources, to centralize services, to link curricular and co-curricular efforts, and to improve its understanding of the factors that influence students' success. Indicators of the academic quality improvements achieved through this central, well-supported and comprehensive undergraduate college include the following highlights of retention from freshman to sophomore year:

- improved from 64% to 76% among undecided students (1985-91);
- improved from 61% to 69% among Guided Studies students (1985-91);
- improved from 71% to 77% among all Ball State matriculates (1987-91).

Ultimately, the goal is not *retention* per se; the goal is an undergraduate education of the highest quality. Improved educational quality yields improved student persistence and increased rates of graduation. Students will be retained in an environment that engages them with their faculty and peers in learning that is active, alive, involved, and lasting. Nothing less than long-term, comprehensive, multi-faceted efforts—real changes in the campus culture—will produce the kind of steady measurable programs that has been demonstrated through University College in the context of Ball State University's mission.

Chapter 4 – Coherence through Coordinated Advising: The Division of Undergraduate Studies at The Pennsylvania State University

Eric White

Background

New students are seldom aware of the nature of a university education and often know little about the full range of educational opportunities open to them. An administrative structure which allows time for curricular exploration enables new students to attend to the challenges at hand without exacting a specific collegiate identity from them. An administrative unit that facilitates easy student movement across college boundaries, identifies comparable programs and services, and allows enrollment in one academic unit until a college and major are selected enables students to experience the curricular offerings of the institution freely without bureaucratic barriers.

The challenge at a very large, comprehensive institution like The Pennsylvania State University is to create coherence in an atmosphere that fosters individuality among the academic colleges and thrives on the richness of many subcultures associated with them while encouraging students to access as much of the institution's curricular offerings as possible. This wonderful dynamic is played out with a student body with interests more diverse than the total curriculum. And while the institution is committed to providing a high quality academic experience reflecting the student's major, the academic college, and the general education program, Penn State is also committed to high quality instruction and academic advising programs and services regardless of college or major choice. Nothing undermines a multi-unit institution more than for its students to make insidious comparisons between units about instruction or advising.

In the 1990s, undergraduate education at institutions such as Penn State will continue to be scrutinized; the relationship between undergraduate education and graduate education and research activities is the measure of success at land-grant and major research institutions. All major studies of higher education in the past decade have stressed that an effective academic advising system must be in place to improve the undergraduate experience for students . While the quality of education provided at most institutions of higher education is typically measured in terms of scholarly output, undergraduates are more likely to assess their educational experiences from a more personal vantage point, such as their experience of the institutional environment for the exchange of ideas and the accessibility of faculty and staff. Academic advising, when delivered appropriately, can be a potent force in creating and maintaining an environment hospitable to students.

Through the Division of Undergraduate Studies, Penn State has long demonstrated its commitment to provide students with excellence in advising by establishing a unit of enrollment which transcends academic disciplines. Students entering Penn State may affiliate with degree-granting colleges representing disciplines such as engineering, business administration, and the liberal arts. If they are not ready to declare a major, or if they want to explore their curricular options, they may select the Division of Undergraduate Studies as their first academic home in the university. Often called "undecided," these students constitute an increasingly large component of the nation's freshmen. During the last decade especially, the number of students who are undecided about their college program of study has steadily increased. Some universities report that as many as 75% of their entering students are undecided.

For many years the undecided student has been the foster child of the academic community. Without a clearly defined home, the undecided student has at times been subjected to second class status in academic advising programs and registration priorities. Undecided students often feel the need to justify their decision not to make an immediate choice of college or major. While formerly such indecision was characterized as a flaw of personality or delayed maturity, now it is more clearly recognized as a wise decision, one which should be encouraged. Too often, entering college or university students make inappropriate decisions in the belief that immediately identifying with a specific major or discipline somehow eliminates the need to explore the validity of such a decision. How an institution chooses to accommodate the undecided student can symbolize its recognition of a diverse population, its administrative creativity, and its responsiveness to student needs.

At Penn State, 1,818 students enrolled for the fall 1991 semester in the Division of Undergraduate Studies. This represents 18.34% of the entering freshmen and the single largest group of first-year baccalaureate students at the university. By contrast, 1,781 students enrolled in the College of Engineering, and 1,382 students enrolled in the College of Business Administration. The remaining first-year students are distributed over the eight other colleges or schools of enrollment—Agricultural Sciences, Arts and Architecture, Communications, Earth and Mineral Sciences, Education, Health and Human Development, the Liberal Arts, and Science.

History

The Division of Undergraduate Studies at Penn State structures the enrollment of students in a way particularly suited to a large institution with a clearly defined configuration of academic colleges. Although the division will soon celebrate its twentieth year of existence, its conceptual beginnings can be traced to the immediate post-World War II period. In 1948 the Division of Intermediate Registration was established as a temporary enrollment home for students in academic difficulty or contemplating a change in educational plans. Many of the students served by the new division were veterans, a group new to university campuses and who often did not experience the university as traditional students did. As a positive reaction to a new campus population, the Division of Intermediate Registration represented a progressive institutional response to the academic needs of a special clientele.

In 1956 the Division of Counseling was established to handle both the personal and educational counseling needs of students. The first comprehensive program for testing and counseling new freshmen, later to be one of four major programs of the Division of Undergraduate Studies, began at this time. By offering educational counseling, the Division of Counseling also provided a form of academic advising outside the boundaries of the traditional faculty approach to course scheduling. Students experiencing curricular indecision constituted the major clientele, but the Division of Counseling also counseled students for other issues, particularly psychological adjustment.

In the early 1970s, the Division of Counseling found its mix of clients more problematic because the student population became more diverse. The combination of students who experienced psychological problems with those undecided about their academic goals lost its appeal, for the staff as well as for the students;

consequently, a separate Mental Health Center was established and staffed by those psychologists preferring a traditional clinical setting. The undecided students and the remaining staff of the Division of Counseling formed the core of yet another new division.

Established in 1973 after the University Faculty Senate deliberated on the formation of a new unit for the exploratory student, the Division of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) was charged with instituting a coordinated university-wide academic information and advising support system to link the academic colleges and the several campuses of Penn State. Staffed with professional advisors, the Division of Undergraduate Studies exemplified again Penn State's creative solution to dealing with changing student populations.

The Division of Undergraduate Studies

Mission and organization. The Division of Undergraduate Studies derives its strength from the following sources: (a) the administration's commitment to students who wish to explore several disciplines before deciding a major, (b) the conceptual development of an effective model for the delivery of advising programs, and (c) a staff of highly professional advisors. Entering freshmen may remain in the division for two full years before they must declare a major. Sophomores, juniors, and seniors in transition from one degree-granting college of the university to another may enroll in the division for a full year before they must declare a major. The advising programs at Penn State are enhanced and other students are served by having coordinators from the Division of Undergraduate Studies in each academic college and on each undergraduate campus of the university's Commonwealth Educational System (CES). In coordination with the colleges and CES campuses, the division also supports an effective program of freshman testing, educational planning and academic advising, and a network of academic information centers to enhance the overall academic efforts of the university.

The Division of Undergraduate Studies is organized on the basis of three key assumptions. First, Penn State has recognized that the exploratory or undecided student needs a separate enrollment unit and that students in transition from one program to another are also better served by a separate administrative unit. Second, the university recognizes that academic advising at Penn State is best served by a two-tiered approach with the first tier for pre-majors who are advised through advising centers and the second tier for declared majors who are advised by faculty representing those majors. Third, Penn State recognizes the need to coordinate all advising activity.

When the Division of Undergraduate Studies was founded, advising was coordinated through consultants or advisor/consultants (depending upon their roles in the colleges or campuses) appointed in each college and on each campus. Consultants in the academic colleges were faculty or staff, serving part or full-time. This system, while effective as a first-step effort to link all advising through a network, was somewhat ragged in its administrative configuration.

As part of Penn State's strategic planning efforts in the mid 1980s, this system of consultants was redesigned as a network of coordinated academic advising and information centers with a full-time Consultant (now called Programs Coordinator) at each college and campus. The central administration funded these positions in the academic colleges at University Park with salaries for programs coordinators budgeted through the division's budget rather than each college. (The advisor/consultants on the campuses of the CES, most of whom already functioned in a full-time capacity, became the programs coordinators for these campuses). This division-supported network coordinates the programs of freshman testing, educational planning, and academic advising and the academic information centers throughout The Pennsylvania State University, thereby enhancing the university's overall academic efforts.

Located within the Office of the Vice Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Education, the Division of Undergraduate Studies is linked administratively with the other programs reporting to the Vice Provost, including Admissions, the Office of the Registrar, the Instructional Development Program, the University Scholars Program, University Testing Services, and the Academic Assistance Programs. All of these offices are directly associated with the instructional mission of the institution and often interact with one another.

The Division of Undergraduate Studies is headed by a director and three assistant directors. A staff of nine professional academic advisors handles the majority of advising responsibilities for students at the University Park Campus of Penn State, assisted by one graduate intern from the Department of Higher Education who is supervised by an assistant director. Not only does each academic college have a programs coordinator, but a Division of Undergraduate Studies programs coordinator carries out the mission of the division at each of the seventeen campuses of the Penn State Commonwealth Educational System and the Behrend College of Penn State in Erie as well. The Division of Undergraduate Studies staff at the University Park Campus also includes a writer, a supervisor for the testing phase of the Freshman Testing, Counseling and Advising Program, and two additional support personnel. Seven clerical, secretarial, and technical personnel complete the staff at University Park.

The total educational experience of each student is a particular concern today for research universities that struggle to improve undergraduate education. Through this model, all students are served by a clearly defined academic home and receive academic advising that assures individualized planning.

Programs of the division of undergraduate studies. The Division of Undergraduate Studies provides four programs for the university: 1) the Freshman Testing, Counseling, and Advising Program, 2) the Enrollment Program, 3) the Academic Advising and Educational Planning Program (including a program for provisional students), and 4) the Academic Information Program. Three assistant directors are responsible for the administration of these four programs.

The freshman testing, counseling, and advising program. By providing new first-year students with a comprehensive program of testing, individualized educational planning, and academic advising before initial registration, the Freshman Testing, Counseling, and Advising Program assists them in evaluating their educational plans. The first stage of academic advising for all entering first-year students, this program focuses on helping them understand their previous preparation, their academic abilities, and their educational and occupational interests while also introducing them to the academic structure and degree programs of the university.

All new first-year students admitted to the university—approximately 10,000 per year—must complete placement testing in English, mathematics, and chemistry before they register for classes. As part of this testing program the division also collects information about students' academic preparation and abilities, educational plans, and career interests. Much of this information is obtained by students' completing a five page form, the Educational Planning Survey, which asks questions about their high school academic experiences, their expectations about university attendance, their educational and occupational plans, and their reasons for attending Penn State.

Once students have been tested, a process that typically begins in the spring before their initial attendance the following fall, students and their families are invited to participate in the counseling and advising phase of the program. This takes place during one day on the campus to which the student has been admitted and includes two media presentations—an introduction to the academic nature of the university and a 45-minute interpretation of the testing phase of the program—and two advising sessions. Students also receive an individualized "Profile of Academic Abilities" which enables them to compare themselves on various academic dimensions with other students entering the university. Students entering an engineering program may, for example, compare their high school averages and SAT scores with other engineering and science-oriented students at the university. Students can also compare their performances on the English, mathematics, and chemistry placement tests with other students. The "Profile of Academic Abilities" also includes "University Expectancy Tables" which chart comparative data about expected individual performance as measured against comparable groups of students. A prospective engineering student, for example, would be charted against one summary of how all engineering and science-oriented students perform academically after one year by percentages of students with similar SAT scores and high school averages and a second summary of how liberal arts and other non-technical majors perform. This information enables students to compare themselves with large groups of other students to assess themselves and understand the rigors of the university environment.

During each student's educational planning interview, geared to educational and academic needs, a professional academic advisor discusses the implications of the testing and gives students a chance to discuss their concerns. If students and their advisor determine a change of college is appropriate, it can be made immediately. While this initial choice of college is subject to further change, it represents the most appropriate starting point for each student. At Penn State students may select from any one of the 10 academic colleges or the Division of Undergraduate Studies. Analysis of change data during this initial interview indicates that approximately 15% of all entering students opt to change. By allowing them to do so, especially in response to their understanding of the Profile of Academic Abilities (which includes the results of the testing phase) and new information about the academic structure of the university which they have learned in earlier portions of the program, students' academic advising needs are systematically and individually addressed. Appropriate identification of major also improves retention rates for the university.

In preparation, advisors analyze the student's Profile of Academic Abilities and the completed Educational Planning Survey and structure the individual educational planning interview by focusing on important matters which are revealed by that analysis. The content of the interview may, of course, change when students arrive with their most current concerns, but the advisor can always address any academic issues identified as important. All students also have the opportunity to discuss the issues and concerns they have about beginning collegiate studies. The advisors' written summary of the interview lays the foundation for future advising sessions.

During this day, students also attend an academic information session to learn how to use the university *Catalog* and other publications containing essential academic information. Students complete their day's activities by attending a meeting sponsored by their college of enrollment to become familiar with its specific requirements and opportunities. Finally, the student meets with another academic advisor, representing either their college of enrollment or the Division of Undergraduate Studies. During this final session, students select the courses for their first semester of enrollment. The advising session is followed by an on-line registration, completing the day with a registration procedure guaranteeing enrollment in those courses selected as part of the advising process.

The families of all new students are also invited to attend the counseling and advising phase of the program. Family members, usually parents, receive the same information as their sons and daughters. The family members see the media presentations about the academic structure of the university and the explanation of the Profile of Academic Abilities at which time they may ask questions about the academic experiences which their sons and daughters are about to encounter. They also participate in the college meetings. Including the family fosters a thorough understanding of what the student is about to face and allows family members to anticipate the many academic decisions which students must make, especially during their first year in the university.

The Freshman Testing, Counseling, and Advising Program has demonstrated its ability to address the academic needs of new students in a coherent, systematic, and effective manner. Feedback from participants in the program has remained consistently positive over the years. Respondents have been especially reassured by the institution which despite admitting thousands of new students each year is committed to providing a program in which the needs of individual students take priority.

The ability to address individual needs while still admitting great numbers of students is a hallmark of the Freshman Testing, Counseling, and Advising Program. The Division of Undergraduate Studies and its precedent, the Division of Counseling, have had the responsibility for conducting this program for the full 36 years of its existence, making it now one of the longest running programs at the University.

The enrollment program. The Enrollment Program of the Division of Undergraduate Studies is a function of the Division's mission to provide the exploratory (i.e., undecided) students in the university, whom it enrolls, with the assistance of professional full-time academic advisors in making academic decisions. Academic advisors are expected to be knowledgeable about the full extent of academic opportunities available to Penn State students or to make appropriate referrals and obtain new information as necessary. Division advisors are assigned students on a random basis and operate on a case load model with each advisor responsible for the students assigned to them. Currently, each advisor works with approximately 200 students. When the division was first established, the ideal maximum number of advisees for a full-time advisor was determined to be 110 students. Over the years the number of students who have chosen to enroll in the division has expanded at a far greater rate than the number of advisors. This presents the division with the continuing challenge of providing high quality academic advising in the face of ever-increasing student/advisor ratios.

The division's professional advisors are critical to the success of the Freshman Testing, Counseling, and Advising Program. Students who meet with a particular advisor in an academic advising interview are typically assigned to that advisor for the duration of their enrollment in the division, thereby establishing the advising relationship even before the student's actual enrollment in the university begins. This strengthens the advising continuum and gives students a point of contact early in their collegiate career.

Academic advising and educational planning program. The division focuses much of its attention on the advising of students enrolled in the unit. However, the division also maintains an Academic Advising and Educational Planning Program for all other students in the university. The advising programs and services of the division are available to all students.

Division advisors have either masters or doctoral degrees. Advisors with doctorates may obtain affiliate academic status in a university department and are often asked to teach courses in their disciplines. Teaching enables advisors to view students and the university from the classroom perspective while providing another service to the university. Such alliances between division staff and the academic departments also signal to the departments that academic advising is a viable career choice for those with university-level teaching credentials. The academic backgrounds of the division's professional advising staff currently include comparative literature, English, speech communications, German, curriculum and instruction, petroleum and natural gas engineering, civil engineering, psychology, chemistry, anthropology, human development, higher education, history, and counseling.

While not having the authority to act as the "official" advisor for students enrolled in other colleges, the division provides considerable advising to them nonetheless—both on a walk-in and appointment basis. Many non-division students come to the division to discuss enrolling in the unit, of course, or to talk about changing from their current college of enrollment to another one. If enrollment in the division makes sense, they are accepted. If not, advisors try to find an appropriate alternative.

Computerization of advising, with academic information available in the form of degree audits and dedicated terminals with student records, has provided more immediate access to advising data. It has not reduced the flow of students in need of programmatic clarification, support for petitions because of inappropriate course choice, or general assistance in learning to maneuver through the maze of colleges, campuses, policies, rules and regulations which make up an institution such as Penn State. As a major research university with over 70,000 students, more than 140 majors, and over 5,000 undergraduate courses, Penn State is a highly complex organization with many policies and rules. Students often need expert assistance in interpreting these many policies and rules that division advisors provide.

Provisional students. Penn State also allows selected students who do not meet a particular admission criterion as a degree candidate to take courses as a provisional student. Provisional students are advised in the division under the aegis of the Academic Advising and Educational Planning Program. Because provisional students do aspire to a degree, the division advisor works with them to gain entry into one of the degree-granting colleges of the university.

Academic Information Program and the Role of the Programs Coordinators

In an institution as complex as Penn State, assuring good communication can prove formidable. With academic information spewing forth at all times from many sources, the difficult task of getting accurate and usable information into the hands of all academic advisors in the university is part of the division's Academic Information Program. Key to this program are the program coordinators and their advising network which enhances and supports the flow of academic information. Originally, consultants assigned to each of the colleges provided division advisors at all locations with current academic information. The consultants needed to be as close to as many sources of academic information in their colleges as possible so that information could be disseminated in a timely and useful fashion, but procedures for releasing information were the responsibility of the assistant director of the division in charge of the Academic Information Program.

With the introduction into the university of the two-tiered model for advising in the mid 1980s, the consultants became Division of Undergraduate Programs Coordinators—with one full-time staff member for each college—located within each academic college but serving multiple roles within the university. In their colleges, they are often responsible for administering the academic advising and information center, for providing the primary advising services for students before they are officially enrolled in majors (most often at the beginning of their junior years), and for serving as a major contact for the faculty advisors of declared majors. Although faculty advising forms the second tier of the Penn State advising system and programs coordinators are not therefore "official" advisors, they often function as such, especially for students who have chosen a particular college for enrollment but not a specific major within it.

Given the complexities of the institution, the programs coordinator serves as a key contact in the colleges to supplement faculty advising and to support it. Programs coordinators help faculty advisors work with students moving from one major in the college to another, provide them with academic information, help produce advising manuals for faculty, and serve as trainers for both new and continuing advisors. Because programs coordinators typically have an academic background affiliated with their college, they understand the culture of the college and are prepared to work with its faculty. With the appropriate credentials, coordinators often teach classes in the college and interact as peers with their faculty colleagues.

The programs coordinators' role is pivotal. Not only do they function as a point of contact between the pre-major and major students in the colleges, but they also connect division students and students from other colleges to the college with which they are affiliated. Like division advisors, programs coordinators work in the Freshman Testing, Counseling and Advising Program and make an early connection with their students.

The network of Division of Undergraduate Studies Programs Coordinators addresses institution-wide advising concerns and provides coherence in advising as students move between the various colleges of the university. The coordinators meet regularly, sharing new information and establishing procedures for disseminating it throughout the university. As members of the division staff, these programs coordinators are also the primary referral point for division students who need information about a particular college and its academic programs. Referrals are often made, not only between division advisors and the college programs coordinators, but also between coordinators. The network assures consistency of advising services across college boundaries, particularly for freshmen and sophomores. While colleges may stand as separate entities, they are also part of the whole university. Students who are unconcerned about the niceties of academic structure are thus provided with high quality advising throughout the institution which signals Penn State's commitment to their academic well-being.

Computerized Records

During 1991-92, approximately 220,000 advising appointments with more than 30,000 students were handled by the Programs Coordinators in the ten colleges of the university and at the seventeen campuses of the Penn State Commonwealth Education System and by an advising staff of nine in the Division of Undergraduate Studies. Documenting the extent and nature of that advising is essential to understanding the advising system. The computerized student information system is used not just to access a wide range of data about students, such as current schedules and transcripts, admission information, and addresses but also to change, add, or alter input data under certain authorized conditions. Information on advising contacts is entered on a specially designed path which can be accessed through dedicated terminals linked to the central information system. After an advising interview, advisors give key information about the interview to a file clerk who enters the data into the system.

Computerized advising information typically includes an advisor's code, the student's college or unit of enrollment, and the nature of the interview. The system is sufficiently complex to track how and where students seek advising. Should a student enrolled in the College of Business Administration meet with an advisor in the Division of Undergraduate Studies, for example, that meeting will be tracked to capture data on how students are using the various parts of the university's advising network.

The nature of the interview is coded by selecting from among a series of content codes (e.g., CC for Curricular Choice, AD for Academic Difficulty, SP for Schedule Planning, I for General Information Giving, and R for Referral). The system allows the advisor to select up to four possible content code entries for each interview. If students are referred to another office or person during the interview, that referral is also coded. If, for example, the student is referred to a faculty member for discussion of progress in a course, then an F will be coded; if the student is referred to another advising center in the university, a C is entered. The advisor may also enter a code for the student's curricular goal or goals (if determined). A student interested in History, Political Science, and Finance would be coded with HIST, PL SC, and FIN. If the student is certain of her or his goal, a major code is entered. The date of each interview is also entered, providing a chronological record of advising interviews by accessing the advising interview path and entering the student's university identification number.

Aggregate reports can be generated from these data. One can, for example, determine the nature of referrals being made in the university or how much advising activity is designated as schedule planning or curricular choice. Knowing undecided students' preferences of major is especially useful as colleges try to determine the flow of students to their particular departments. The system therefore allows one to determine both the extent to which an individual student seeks assistance from an advisor and the extent of advising activity at the entire institution.

Currently the system is available to all professional advisors since advising centers have computer terminals available for data entry. Not all departments have these terminals yet, but the plan is to have the system reach every advisor. Basically only three conditions are necessary for the system to work at all advising venues: each advisor needs an identification code, each advisor needs to code the specifics of the advising interviews which they conduct, and a clerk needs to enter the data.

Once this system is completely in place, it will be possible to follow students throughout their entire advising experience at the university. Such information can be invaluable to the institution. Knowing how often and when students use advisors can suggest reconfigurations of the system. Documenting students' goals, especially the frequency of change, may suggest the most efficient way to structure educational paths for students. If, for example, the data were to indicate that students make many changes of educational goals in their first year of study and that their early commitments are tentative, then a general status for all entering students might be more sensible than handling many changes of college and majors.

An institution which bogs itself down with a long paper trail and an elaborate bureaucracy to process changes of college and major for first and possibly second year students may be spending valuable resources in vain. With the increase of undecided students on university campuses, the effort to maintain separate structures for these major changers may prove futile. Instead, keeping track of the intended goals of students through an on-line data entry system may provide the information necessary for sensible planning without creating artificial boundaries of enrollment for students, boundaries which students cross oblivious to the collegiate structure of the institution.

The Future

Twenty years after its founding, the Division of Undergraduate Studies continues to evolve. The introduction of the programs coordinators to the staff and the affiliation of these staff members with the colleges and campuses of the university emphasize the commitment to a strong, connected academic advising system at a major research institution. The two-tiered model recognizes differences between students in pre-major and major status and calls for separate delivery systems while still allowing each academic college to maintain its own advising culture and history.

As the dialogue surrounding faculty responsibilities for advising continues, and the curriculum of the institution changes with new emphases on multicultural education, writing across the curriculum, and new concepts of general education, the advising of each student becomes more critical. Technological advances provide degree audits, transcripts, and semester grade summaries at the touch of a button, transforming academic advising. New means of telecommunications allowing students to enter and alter their academic schedules are forging new types of relationships between advisors and students. Key to these changes are the professional academic advisors working with the exploratory student. Their presence in units such as the Division of Undergraduate Studies manifests a creative approach to shifting student populations, bringing coherence to a large complex institution, and once again, where it most counts, assuring that the academic experience of students is as fulfilling as possible.

Chapter 5 – Flexibility at a Comprehensive University: University College at The Ohio State University

Thomas L. Minnick

These days, when it frequently seems that all of American higher education is under siege, it may be difficult to recall the optimism of colleges and universities in the late 1960s. At that time, campuses were flooded with applications from students born in the period beginning about nine months following the bombing of Pearl Harbor through the end of the war decade. Some states responded to the boom by constructing whole systems of higher education. After beginnings that were often forced and sometimes fitful, many regional universities and community colleges established in that period now find themselves maturing, having accumulated 25 or 30 years of history, worked out a mission, and developed a sense of identity, even as their first surge of young faculty members approach and enter retirement. In the Midwest, such schools as Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio and Indiana University-Purdue University at Fort Wayne come quickly to mind as representatives of this period of growth.

At The Ohio State University during the mid-60s the continual increases in applicants and enrollees took on something of the regularity of the annual flooding of the Nile. Administrative dynasties might come and go, but a form of reliable fertility provided a pool of talented incoming students who seemed to insure renewal and growth. The land grant university of Ohio and (in language of those days that became controversial in the later years of stiff competition for shares of the state budget) its "flagship" institution, Ohio State entered the sixties with a university-wide enrollment of about 30,000. Toward the end of the decade, total enrollment neared 50,000, and some in Ohio predicted that by the end of the twentieth century, enrollments of 90,000 would be routine. In fact, they leveled off near 60,000 by 1981, largely because the Ohio General Assembly effectively legislated a ceiling on the central campus in Columbus by setting a cap on state subsidy at the amount generated by 40,000 undergraduates.

Thoughtful teachers and administrators were not unduly alarmed by the prospect of a continuously enlarging student body. However, they were concerned that in the principal research university in Ohio, with the state's largest graduate enrollment and a comprehensive array of programs and choices, the entering freshman might be overlooked and overwhelmed. Their concern eventually produced a new enrollment unit for freshmen charged with advising them and staying alert to their general welfare. Political issues, such as how to assure a fair share of continuing state funding for Ohio State in the face of burgeoning community-based two-year campuses and technical schools, played a role in the formative discussions, but educational concerns principally led the university faculty to conceive and approve of the creation of this new unit, a University College intended to serve as a "portal of entry" for all new freshmen.

The mission of University College would be to advise lower division students on curricular matters, to support them in their initial year or two of enrollment, and to hand them on to a degree-granting unit once they settled on a thoughtful, workable choice. This statement of mission for the college emerged out of long, sometimes heated debate. For some, the ideal of a helpful senior scholar patiently inducting the novice freshman into the ethos of the university was violated by the creation of a cadre of professional academic advisors who were not first and foremost members of the faculty. Others viewed that ideal as an unrealistic goal, a "Mr. Chips" fantasy outdated in an environment of pressure to publish and produce grant proposals, an ideal that in practice could too easily become unprofessional and paternalistic.

When the debating was done, the essential character of the college was established by a faculty decision, informed and guided by educational values and experience. It was not created, as it were *ex nihilo*, by administrative fiat. Its general mission, with changes imposed by shifting institutional and national demographics and priorities, has remained constant in the 25 years since the college was approved by the Faculty Senate and the Board of Trustees. So has the fundamental structure of the college, developed to serve this mission effectively and efficiently.

Each student in the college enrolls in a "Curricular Academic Program" or CAP area, of which 19 cover the range from Agriculture to Veterinary Medicine (including all of the undergraduate and graduate/professional goals which students bring as they enter). The twentieth CAP area is the General Baccalaureate Curriculum which was created for the students described variously in these 25 years as "undecided," "undeclared," "decided to remain undecided," "deciding" and, most recently, "exploring." The 20 CAP areas are clustered into five supervisory areas, each headed by a Coordinator of Academic Advising. (Exhibit A spells out these clusters in detail, along with the most recent data available on enrollment distribution.)

In addition to this arrangement by CAP area, the college has several programs that are defined by the special populations they serve. The Minority Advising Program, headed by a sixth coordinator, was originally labelled as the Office of Developmental Education (in language consistent with the state's funding and monitoring models) and served only Ohio students recruited through programs of the university's Admissions Office and Office of Minority Affairs. The substantial decline, then demise, of line-item state funding for such programs had the unforeseen benefit of promoting wider access to this service for all minority students in the college who desire its help. Honors students, student athletes (who have specific curricular conditions to meet for eligibility, including the need to make "normal progress" as carefully and stringently defined by our Office of Academic Affairs), part-time evening and non-traditional students, international students—all receive programmatic services made possible because the general population at Ohio State is sufficiently large that nearly any identifiable category contains enough students to justify allocating resources to them in a systematic way.

This basic twofold structure—following curricular lines in one dimension, and serving specialized populations in a second—has served University College well, for it has provided a solid framework for effective communication and lines of authority within the college, while avoiding rigidity that could stifle the ability to respond to student and institutional needs.

Given this general structure, University College has proved to be a useful device for serving the large numbers of lower-division students who attend Ohio State. Through its four principal functions—advising, teaching, coordinating the orientation of new students, and acting as the college of record—University College promotes the general educational welfare of students by retaining a large measure of flexibility. The college's flexibility in turn allows the university to adapt easily to changing times.

Advising

What fills most of the collective time in University College is one-on-one advising. The largest enrollment unit at Ohio State, University College has responsibility for about 15,000 students in a typical autumn quarter. This enrollment declines to about 13,000 in winter quarters and about 11,000 in spring quarters, with about 2,000 continuing students to be advised every summer. The decline is due principally to the emigration of students who transfer to a degree-granting unit when they decide on a major and qualify to enter it.

Each student in University College is assigned by CAP area to a specific advisor. As far as possible, that advisor's academic background matches the interests of his or her assigned advisees. For example, a student with an interest in the field of fine arts will be assigned to an advisor whose academic background is in Art, Music, Dance, or a related field. Even in Engineering, Business, and other technical fields we have generally been able to make close matches: currently, one of our Engineering advisors has two Masters degrees in Engineering, several of our Business advisors hold or are studying for the M.B.A., and we have employed three physicians (M.D. in hand) as pre-Health advisors while they work on other graduate degrees.

A student generally remains with the same advisor as long as he or she stays in the same CAP area. But should that interest change, the student may move easily to another CAP area and to another advisor. Shifting from one CAP area to another is substantially easier to accomplish than shifting from college to college, especially as more and more departments and colleges limit enrollment through added prerequisites or higher admission criteria. University College encourages students to explore diverse academic and career options, and the availability in one building of advisors for all areas promotes this exploration.

Our advising staff usually numbers about 80 full-time and part-time staff members. At the current time, we employ six full-time coordinators of advising and fourteen full-time academic advisors. Our remaining 59 advisors are graduate students on halftime appointments. In an autumn quarter, a Graduate Administrative Associate works with about 200 students on average, and most full-time advisors are assigned about 400 students. The numbers vary to some extent for special populations—honors advisors and Minority Advising Program personnel have fewer students but deal more intensively with specific kinds of concerns. We also try to maintain a lower advisor-advisee ratio in intrusive or interventionist programs, such as the Academic Support Program for students who enter at the lowest remedial levels in mathematics and English, and for students in our Alternatives Area, advanced sophomores who have not yet selected a feasible academic direction.

In its advising role, University College speaks for the degree-granting units. Our coordinator for the business CAP area, for example, is in weekly, often daily, contact with the advising staff of the College of Business. Her job is to relay accurate up-to-date information about the business curriculum to her staff who in turn teach and advise the pre-business students. The example of business provides an illuminating case study of the flexibility that University College inherently makes easy at Ohio State.

In the early 1970s, the study of business at Ohio State, as at many schools, was not a popular undergraduate major and therefore not especially competitive, but in the 1980s it became highly popular and correspondingly competitive. While the freshman class entering in a typical autumn quarter has numbered about 7000 for most of the last 25 years, the percentage of those interested in business has fluctuated dramatically. But the capacity of the business school has not varied much in these years. The faculty of the College of Business installed ever-taller barriers to admission: first, success in a small core of courses; then success in a larger core; then a higher definition of "success," and ultimately a competitive admissions process with a fixed number of new seats annually and a fluctuating grade-point average for admission. The combination of rising interest in business and a steady capacity within the College of

Business caused a growing back-up of business-directed students in University College.

Ohio State is, of course, not the only school to report this phenomenon, nor is the college of business the only one raising its admission standards within the university. For example, in recent memory admission requirements of computer science have risen and fallen dramatically. Journalism, architecture, veterinary medicine, and communications have all seen dramatic upswings in student interest in recent years. So have medicine, pharmacy, education, and the liberal arts, but in these instances the swings were initially through dramatic decreases with eventual reversals and currently steady increases of student interest. At this writing we are witnessing dramatic rises of interest in natural resources and liberal arts, both areas in serious decline as recently as two years ago.

Think of University College as a spongy water balloon. The capacity has stayed about the same, but enrollment forces have pushed on one section or another more or less at will and have frequently shifted without warning. As the faculties of our degree-granting units respond to these shifts, to changing professional directions and standards, and to declining resources, they are more free to respond quickly and, in a sense, arbitrarily because we have a University College that, in part at least, can help absorb the effects of change.

On another front, for a decade Ohio State has implemented an admissions policy that shifts from open admissions (largely "first come, first served") to higher standards, including a required college preparatory program and annually more competitive high school ranks. Even so, we have developed and implemented only one overall freshman admissions policy, since virtually all students are admitted to University College. Without the buffer zone of a University College, admissions decisions would be made on a by-curriculum basis driven largely by supply and demand, requiring annual re-evaluation for each academic area—a virtually intolerable administrative burden in so diverse and comprehensive an institution as Ohio State. Such a curriculum- or college-driven enrollment policy would, in the minds of many here at Ohio State, also violate our land grant history. And from an educational point of view, admissions decisions based on a freshman's professed statement of interest ignore a permanent fact of undergraduate life: more than 50% of the entering "traditional" students change their academic direction significantly in the first three or four quarters of enrollment. University College provides the free port where students can make such changes without prejudice.

Within University College a major means of flexibility derives from our staffing pattern. With most of our advisors on graduate appointments, we have substantial turnover. About one-third of our Graduate Administrative Associates leave each year. While this degree of turnover provides several challenges, it also promotes flexibility in rearranging and redistributing the advising staff to correspond to demographic shifts in academic interest.

An interesting constant in the history of the college is the percentage of students who declare themselves undecided at entry: the proportion holds steady at about 18% to 20% of each entering class. A nationally recognized strength of our University College is our advising program for undecided students, created by Dr. Virginia Gordon, with its natural outgrowth in the Alternatives Advising program, given leadership by Dr. George Steele. Both of these programs (and, indeed, these individuals) have received well deserved recognition by the National Academic Advising Association and the American Council on Testing through ACT/NACADA National Awards.

Students value these programs for the assistance offered. But in a compelling institutional sense, both programs are also valuable because they provide effective solutions to the problem of how to serve the perennially large group of students who are genuinely undecided at matriculation and the increasingly large groups of students who are closed out from their initial field of interest as a result of lack of capacity in that program. The high quality of these specific advising programs at Ohio State is also related to the dimensions of our need for them. It is unlikely that Ohio State would or could have created such programs without its initial commitment to University College, or that these programs would have achieved such a high quality without a history of support and experimentation within University College.

Perhaps even more important is another kind of flexibility that our advisors promote. When an area becomes increasingly popular, we try to identify cognate areas that may prove equally attractive to students denied entry to their first choice. The College of Business is again a good example. We have always tried to assure that some advisors in the College of Business had backgrounds in agriculture and/or home economics (now human ecology), so that business-directed students would hear about those sometimes less popular cognate fields. Pre-health advisors try to keep knowledgeable about the wide range of health career options (nursing, pharmacy, the varied allied medical professions, as well as pre-medicine, pre-dentistry, and pre-optometry)—not only in order to provide a protective safety net for the pre-med student whose chances for admission to medical school may not be strong, but also, in a positive way, to promote a successful match for students whose initial health area selection may not prove suitable in the long run. Providing office space in a single college for advisors from many disciplines has encouraged and facilitated dialogue among them. Such dialogue, though always welcome, is not always easy to achieve in a large, comprehensive university.

A final advising strength to be noted in the University College concept as implemented at Ohio State is that with a separate identity, University College advisors can—indeed, are expected to be—neutral with respect to a students' many plausible academic choices. Advisors genuinely seek to match students with the curriculum best suited to their academic interests and specific academic abilities while guiding students to their most rational, workable, satisfying choice of academic major or career.

Teaching

Apart from the published documents of the university, Ohio State's largest single means of communication with its students is made possible through University College. All entering lower division students are required to enroll in the course "University Survey 100," known campus-wide as "UVC 100." On successful completion of the course, a student earns one credit hour. The course was graded on a "Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory" ("S/U") basis for about ten years but has for most of its 25-year history carried a traditional letter grade ("A" to "E"). When the course was graded "S/U," students frequently regarded it as trivial and annoying ("Mickey Mouse" was a common description), and attendance was sporadic once students had assured themselves of a passing "S" or a non-passing "U" (the word "failing" does not really apply here, since the mark of "U" carried no penalty). Now, with the class graded traditionally with letter grades, students frequently evaluate the course as "useful, but too much work for only one credit." Many faculty are pleased to witness this change.

The course is offered in not less than 20 versions—one corresponding to each CAP area, so students interested in the allied medical professions take a version tailored to their intended curriculum, and so on throughout the areas. In addition, where a degree unit's interest or enrollment numbers make the investment useful, specialized sections are addressed to special populations: honors sections, evening sections for nontraditional students, sections for student-athletes, and sections in all CAP areas for minority students.

The overt agenda of the course is to introduce students to the university in its many aspects: as a place for liberal education no matter what a student's major program may be, as a community with special rules about academic integrity and academic misconduct, as a stage on which the players change and grow in sometimes predictable developmental ways, as an agency that certifies competence in a variety of professional disciplines, as a setting with such resources as advanced laboratories and a research library, as a place where any idea stands or falls without prejudice on its own merit, and so on and on (A generic syllabus follows as Exhibit B).

The class is taught every quarter on all campuses of Ohio State to a total annual student audience of about 9,500. This fact alone makes it both an attractive device for individuals and groups who want to get a message distributed, and also an easy target for others who may disagree with decisions about what freshmen will or will not hear in this class. The college averages three calls each week from persons or groups seeking access to the students in University College. The range includes: "I am doing a dissertation on ________ and would like to use just one or two class periods with your students" (these to be deducted from the 20 class hours that comprise the course!); "We're the Sailing Club (or the Skiing Club, or the Sky Diving Club) and would like to talk with all your classes for about 15 minutes" (Usually, the mention of 80 lectures in the autumn quarter alone is enough to modify such a request); "We're the pre-MED Club and want to publicize our meeting schedule" (Such a CAP-related group is always welcome in the relevant areas); "We'd like to promote voter registration for new students" (The three such offers this election year were referred to our own Student Council for a joint effort); and "We have a new Physics sequence that we could not get into the bulletin in time" (If you will teach our advisors and give us plenty of flyers about the changes, we will be pleased to distribute the information to prospective students).

The course has frequently served as a vehicle for delivering a message from the degree-granting units, the departments, or central administration. When personal safety on campus became a national issue, they included a newly available twenty-minute lecture with videotape into all sections. As AIDS grew more alarming, University Survey was the first obvious institutional means to start discussions about it; since 1987, every section of University Survey has included a class period devoted to talking thoughtfully and in some detail about responsible sexual behavior. As the new curriculum launched at Ohio State in 1990 was implemented, University Survey became an indispensable tool for giving students up-to-the-moment information. Lectures on "Equality of Race" and "Equality of Gender" have served to open a dialogue with students about behavior that will not be tolerated on campus. Such topics provide a chance to explain that such behavior is intolerable in a university *not* because it is politically incorrect but because discrimination violates the freedom of inquiry that is the university's *sine qua non*. For about 15 years, the class has included a library instruction component which now includes two required assignments (the second is a brief annotated bibliography in MLA style) and counts for 25% of the course grade. We try to tie together all the elements of the class as an introduction to university study and its values.

So much for the overt agenda. When things go as intended, a student's instructor in University Survey is also that student's academic advisor. The covert agenda of the course is to allow advisors to get to know their advisees as students—a view advisors rarely get. This contact also assures parents that if students are attending all their classes, they will have a chance, twice every week throughout their first term, to see, hear from, and ask questions of their assigned academic advisor. This assurance is a welcome antidote to parents feeling that no one will be on hand to listen if their student has a problem, which is common at a large school, and this is a kept promise. A typical University Survey class has about 100 students (or roughly half a graduate student's total number of assigned advisees). Such a group usually meets once each week in lecture, then in three or four recitation groups of 25 to 30 students. In short, teaching this course is mostly a kind of group advising (or perhaps much of advising is a kind of one-on-one teaching). This pattern has been workable, efficient, and flexible. A happy added benefit is that this part of the normal duty provides classroom teaching experience to some graduate students who might otherwise not have that chance.

Orientation

Shortly after its creation, University College was assigned the task of providing the orientation program for entering lower division students at Ohio State. Every summer about 7,500 students (including new transfer students) and an equivalent number of parents and other family guests attend this two-day program. Abbreviated one-day programs are used for all other quarters. A small staff works at the planning and implementing of orientation on a year-round basis, filling the brief interstices by acting as the college's recruitment arm. The staff expands greatly with student workers—in spring, when mailing to these thousands of prospective students and registering them for the correct two-day orientation takes on massive proportions, and in summer, when the student assistants become highly visible, highly effective peer advisors and student ambassadors.

In a word, what has marked the work of University College in the university orientation program is its fundamentally *academic* character. The principal function of orientation is its academic core—learning enough about each student's abilities and aspirations so advisers can help each student to his or her best starting schedule at Ohio State. While advisors work hard at being very well organized and continuously cordial, the bottom line is, what makes the best academic sense for each individual student coming to Ohio State? With the help of other offices, University College assures the needed mix of other information about support systems and student affairs. But the principal network is with the degree units, for University College is accountable to the *academic* lines of the university.

Several hundred faculty members each summer represent the faculty to parents of new students and explain the expectations of the faculty to new students as they enter. For participating faculty members, orientation is a welcome and rewarding duty. As a result, students at Ohio State begin the process of interacting with and learning from faculty on their first official day on campus. This interaction, for both students and their family members, helps to dispel the myth that students never really get to talk with faculty members at a comprehensive research institution like Ohio State. A recurrent theme in the remarks of faculty members is that they sit patiently and a little lonely in their offices too much of the time, waiting for the students who are the reason they stayed at the university. Other systems might well generate the same message; however, University College's orientation program is both efficient and effective for the students and also promotes credibility for advisors among faculty whose participation promotes a better understanding of University College.

College of Record

The records function of University College is, like most such operations, visible only when something goes wrong. To appreciate the value of having a single office processing virtually all the records of incoming students requires the imaginary effort to consider how matters might be without such a single unit. Ohio State has sometimes been called a "Dean's University," a phrase intended to emphasize the decentralized lines of authority and the significant role of the nineteen colleges in establishing their own procedures. Although the colleges conform in a general way to the rules and bylaws of the institution, the registrar's authority does not abrogate the individuality of the colleges and does not extend to such academic functions as dismissal and reinstatement. If entering freshmen were immediately dispersed to the degree units, a measure of variation among colleges would be expected and needed. Just such variation now exists at the degree unit level, with differences in what constitutes "academic progress" and grounds for dismissal and reinstatement, college by college. Given the propensity of freshmen to change academic direction, the authority of University College and the degree of uniformity it can make possible are safeguards against uneven treatment of freshmen and many sophomores. At least as far as keeping their records and adjudicating petitions and other records actions, University College is able to maintain a high degree of equity.

A constant attempt has been to make all decisions relating to a student with as much personal information about that student as possible. So dismissal decisions (or the contrary decisions to extend probation) are made on a case-by-case basis as a collaborative decision between the student's academic advisor, that advisor's immediate supervisor, and a member of the senior staff of the college. This personal concern is a goal in all decisions relating to students and that degree of personalization is central to the mission of University College at Ohio State.

The initial funding for University College came from the degree-granting units, each of which provided an amount corresponding to the work load they expected to lose when freshmen entered a central unit. To those resources was added an amount roughly equivalent to (a) the subsidy earned by requiring every new student to take a one-credit University Survey course and (b) part of the subsidy earned by employing and enrolling 60 graduate students each year. When added functions were assigned (such as orientation and an honors program), additional funding *sometimes* followed. In return for these resources, the university has received a nationally recognized program that attempts to serve all students while responding to the specific needs of each. The concept of the college has been enlarged and refined. At this writing nearly 250,000 students have been served, and nearly 1100 employees (most of them graduate students who have thereby paid for their degrees) have worked for as little as one year to as much as 21 years. More and more faculty at Ohio State are coming to understand the strengths and objectives of University College in helping freshmen become successful students in a large research university.

Exhibit A

CAP and Enrollment Distribution by Supervisory Area, Autumn Quarter 1991

Supervisory Area	CAP Areas	Enrollment	Total
Area 1	General Baccalaureate Curriculum (GBC)	2400	
	Social Work (SWK)	88	2488
Area 2	Business (BUS)	3113	3113
Area 3	Agriculture (AGR)	41	
	Natural Resources (NRE)	181	
	Human Ecology (HEC)	362	
	Architecture (AHR)	421	
	Landscape Architecture (LARCH)	48	
	Engineering (ENG)	1284	
	Veterinary Medicine (VME)	193	2530
Area 4	Arts and Sciences (ASC)	2186	
	Art (ART)	342	
	Music (MUS)	160	
	Academy Students (enrolled in High School and OSU)	77	2765
Area 5	Education (EDU)	1471	
	Allied Medical Professions (AMP)	858	
	Dentistry/Dental Hygiene (DEN/DHY)	131	
	Medicine (MED)	660	
	Nursing (NUR)	377	
	Optometry (OPT)	101	
	Pharmacy (PHR)	310	3908
Area 6	Evening Program	401	401
Area 7	Minority Advising Program	663	663
Area 8	Alternatives Advising	367	367
Area 9	Academic Support Program	135	135
Total College Enrollment Autumn Quarter 1991			16370

Exhibit B: A Generic Syllabus for University Survey 100

GENERAL BACCALAUREATE CURRICULUM
UNIVERSITY SURVEY
Autumn Quarter, 1992

Instructor________________________
015 Enarson Hall
292-0646

Course Description: Introduction to the University community; strategies for successful transition to and participation in that community; institutional context of academic programs; education and learning in life-long processes; University resources and procedures.

Required Textbook: University Survey: A Guidebook for New Students. Thomas L. Minnick & Mary Ellen Jenkins, eds. (Columbus, Ohio: University College, 1992). "Exploring OSU Academic Majors" Booklet and the Career Decision System (Harrington-O'Shea) are available at the University Bookstore.

Assignments: Every student will complete the following out-of-class assignments:

1. A library assignment by which the student will demonstrate familiarity with LCS (the Library Control System) and will complete a search strategy for locating information in the OSU Libraries relevant to assignments in this and other classes.

2. An annotated bibliography on a critical issues topic.

3. GBC related assignment: "Exploring OSU Majors" (including the completion of a self-assessment tool, attendance at three academic major information sessions, and completion of an essay question).

Examinations: Additional graded work will include two examinations:

1. A test on University procedures, the grading system, and the **Code of Student Conduct** and an essay question on the first group of readings.
2. A final examination on the University's curricula and the last group of readings.

Assignment and Examination Policy: No late assignments will be accepted nor make-up exam given unless prior permission has been given by your instructor. Such permission will be granted only when extenuating circumstances can be documented. In accordance with the Code of Student Conduct, all work is to be that of the student being graded.

Calculation of Grades: The formula which follows expresses the relative value of each of the assignments in the calculation of the final grade. THIS COURSE IS GRADED A THROUGH E.

Assignment	Points	Due Week of
1. Library Assignment	10	October 5
2. Midterm	15	October 19
3. Annotated Bibliography	15	November 2
4. "Exploring OSU Majors" Assessment (see GBC booklet for breakdown)	40	November 16
5. Final Examination	20	November 30

Attendance Policy: As with all University courses, attendance is expected. Therefore, students are responsible for knowing any changes to the syllabus, for all information presented and discusses in class, for announcements made in class, and for materials distributed in class. Class participation is also expected and considered an important part of your work in this course.

Schedule of Course Activities:

UNIT 1: THE PURPOSE OF A UNIVERSITY

Week of

Sept. 21 R/L Course introduction; review of course objectives; why are you in college? How is college different from high school?

Sept. 28 R What is a college education? What is the purpose of a university? What is academic freedom?

Assigned Readings:
James Cicarelli, " A New Debate Over the Old Question: Is College an Investment or an End in Itself?"
Chris Jones and Susan Sawark, "Teaching Associates at The Ohio State University"

Chapter 9: An Epilogue on Academic Freedom

UNIT II: BECOMING A SUCCESSFUL STUDENT

L Introduction to Ohio State University. What non-academic resources are on campus to help you succeed as a student?

Readings: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 6, Appendix G

Oct. 5 R What is a successful student? Practical methods for academic success. Academic resources on campus to help you become a successful student.

Readings: Chapter 8, Appendices E and F
William Brown, "Why I Don't Let Students Cut Classes"

L Code of Student Conduct: What are students' rights and responsibilities? What are the University's obligations to the student?
Reading: Chapter 4, "Concerning Student Rights and Responsibilities" and Appendices A, B, and C

LIBRARY ASSIGNMENT DUE

UNIT III: CURRICULAR ACADEMIC PROGRAM INFORMATION

Oct. 12 R Overview of OSU Majors; Learning to schedule with **Brutus**
Readings: Chapter 7, "Planning for a Career or Your Search for Tomorrow"
James Burtchaell, "Major Decisions"
William Raspberry, "College Major Doesn't Mean That Much" (optional)

	L	**ACADEMIC/CAREER EXPLORATION SESSIONS** (see distributed schedule for appropriate room) (Review Chapters 2, 3, 4 and readings through Brown for the midterm)
Oct. 19	R	MIDTERM - 1st Library Assignment Due
	L	Introduction to OSU Library Skills Readings: Chapter 5, "Tomorrow's Library Today - An Introduction to OSU Libraries" Virginia Tiefel, "Libraries - Indispensable in an Information Age"
Oct. 26	R	The value of the General Education Curriculum and why the University requires them. What is an educated person? Reading: Thomas Jones, "The Educated Person"
	L	**ACADEMIC/CAREER INFORMATION SESSIONS** (see distributed schedule for appropriate room)
Nov. 2	R	"Exploring OSU Majors" - Introduction **BRING COMPLETED CDS (Harrington-O'Shea) TO CLASS** **ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ASSIGNMENT DUE**
	L	**ACADEMIC/CAREER INFORMATION SESSIONS (see** distributed schedule for appropriate room)
Nov. 9	R	"Exploring OSU Majors" - interpreting the CDS. How to decide.

UNIT IV: CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

	L	Contemporary Issues Lecture: **Racial Equality** Reading: Martin Luther King, "I Have a Dream"
Nov. 16	L	Contemporary Issues Lecture: **Gender Equality** Reading: Rosalyn Wiggins Berne, "Keeping Our Balance in the 90's - Women at Work, Women at Home"
	R	Contemporary Issues Recitation Readings: Nondiscrimination Policy, OSU Policy on Sexual Harassment, OSU **"EXPLORING OSU MAJORS" ASSIGNMENT DUE** (Turn in last two pages of GBC booklet and CDS)
Nov. 23	L	Contemporary Issues Lecture: **AIDS**

		Reading: Marshall Brown, "Some Facts about AIDS and the New Rules for Social Behavior"

UNIT V: EDUCATION AND CHANGE

	R	How will you change during your college years? What developmental tasks do college students in general accomplish? What is the relationship between intellectual growth and maturity? **Readings:** Virginia Gordon, "The Developing College Student" David Finster, "Freshmen Can Be Taught to Think Creatively, Not Just Amass Information"
Nov. 30	L	How can a college education prepare you for life? (Review of University procedures) **Readings:** Edmund Pelligrini, "Having a Degree and Being Educated" Mary Sherry, "Postgraduate Paralysis" Mark Ballard, "Job Search: Chance or Plan?" (optional)
Dec. 1	R	**FINAL EXAMINATION** given in class

The "Exploring OSU Academic Majors" booklet will be graded as follows:

Completing the CDS	10 points
Attending/writing reactions to three Major/Career Information Sessions	15 points
"Where Do I Go From Here?" Essay	15 points

Chapter 6 – Valuing the First-Year Student: University College at Butler University

Marilyn K. Spencer

Over the past 20 years almost all existing university colleges have been developed in state-supported institutions; however, most of the early university colleges in this country were in private institutions. Many, like the University of Chicago's, were dismantled a number of years ago while others continue to thrive. University College at Butler University has existed since 1945, its genesis resulting from a major transformation of the institution within the previous 15-year period. During that time Butler created three new professional colleges: Education, Business Administration, and Pharmacy.

As the professional programs grew, so did the concern of the liberal arts faculty for maintaining undergraduate education in the liberal arts as the central mission of the institution. A review of the entire curriculum culminated in a new core curriculum, and shortly thereafter in 1945, University College was established with the mission of administering the core. By enrolling all new students in University College where they would remain until completing the core, the faculty hoped to ensure that students would be well grounded in the liberal arts before beginning a professional major.

University College thus officially developed from a concern for the curriculum. Nothing in the original documents or current university catalogue mentions supporting or valuing individual students as an important role for University College. Nonetheless, the college probably accomplishes more by attending to individual student needs than it does through its other, specified tasks. University College has become a place on campus where student welfare is primary.

Freshmen and even sophomores may find themselves on academic probation, facing the frightening possibility of academic dismissal if they cannot make acceptable grades. While superficially their problems may appear to be totally academic, in the background may well be parental illness or divorce, uncertainty about whether they have selected the correct major, money worries, roommate problems, and other distractions—large and small. Students reveal their histories and seek direction in large numbers in the University College offices each semester where counseling, testing, and advising can enable them to discover a new direction, perhaps, or even a new sense of self-worth. Time is available to meet students' needs. Because students are the primary concern of University College, unlike the deans of degree colleges the University College dean does not have to balance the needs of faculty, alumni, the administration, and the profession with the needs of students.

During the first year on campus, students begin to learn about themselves, redefining themselves in ways that surprise them and

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sometimes distress their parents and others close to them. As they learn more about themselves and what certain career choices really entail, more than half resolve to plot an entirely different course. Often students underestimate the difficulty of certain majors or overestimate their own relative intellectual abilities. They lack experience and skill to juggle the newfound freedoms with an adequate, effective study regimen.

Confronted with a clear mismatch between themselves and their academic goals, some students make a smooth transition to another choice of major. But others find the way difficult and must start over more than once, questioning their abilities and self-worth time and time again along the way. Helping students in this formative process is part of the university's mission.

Aiding Students Within a Private University

In many ways being a private institution makes little difference in how a university sets its priorities and educational goals for its students. The major differences between Butler University and others described in this monograph derive less from funding sources, private versus public, than from its definition of its mission.

Butler University's mission clearly states that it exists mainly to serve undergraduates. Although scholarly activity is important for tenure and promotion, Butler is clearly not a publish or perish institution. Many private and public universities' prestige and funding rely to a great extent on research and the dollars research grants garner. Success in research at reasonable cost typically requires an emphasis on doctoral programs as well. Responding to the well-publicized demands to redirect resources toward undergraduate education and prove successful outcomes mean making wrenching changes in the culture of many research institutions. On the other hand, for Butler and other institutions like it seeking new methods, programs, and structures to better meet the needs of undergraduates is consonant with its fundamental mission.

Part of the reason that a private university might be expected to give more attention to its undergraduate students is their importance as a funding source. Even with a sizeable endowment, undergraduate tuition generated about 65% of Butler University's operating budget. Being "tuition driven" makes the university fiscally sensitive to its students and their families. For that reason, if for none other, such reliance on tuition mandates an emphasis on programs that attend to and retain students. Because University College provides academic support programs that yield high retention rates, it is an administrative structure that makes sense philosophically and fiscally for a private university whose basis mission is to serve undergraduates.

University College Programs

University College at Butler University currently is responsible for 1) serving as the enrollment unit for most freshmen and sophomores; 2) administering the core curriculum for all undergraduates, with direct responsibility for the single (two-semester) inter- disciplinary course in the core; 3) conducting the academic portions of the student orientation program; 4) providing the coordination of the summer registration and orientation programs for incoming freshmen and their families; 5) awarding all advanced placement credit for undergraduate and graduate students, and 6) administering associate degree programs.

1. Enrollment Unit

The University College at Butler is the enrollment unit for all freshmen and sophomores, except those majoring in the fine arts who have passed the required audition. Until 1986, all University College students were required to finish the core curriculum prior to being "advanced" to their senior colleges. Even though all students may now be advanced before completing the core curriculum, fine arts undergraduates remain the only ones to enroll in their senior college from the beginning.

Advising. As the enrollment unit for almost half of all undergraduates, University College (UC) has developed a cadre of faculty advisors from four senior colleges—Business Administration, Education, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Pharmacy. Currently, 75 faculty serve as advisors for UC students. Unlike any of the other colleges, UC pays an advising stipend of $6.00 per advisee per semester. Some advisors take a cash payment, but others opt for this stipend-in-kind to pay for subscriptions, books, memberships, office equipment, and travel. This payment is modest compensation for activity not easily or typically evaluated by the senior colleges. According to many UC advisors, their deans would not significantly weigh their contributions through UC advising even if such evaluation information were readily available and easily interpreted.

The University College has to convince deans and department heads to allow new faculty to become UC advisors. Luckily in a university like Butler, all department heads and most faculty understand the importance of serving the students' needs. Although some few department heads feel that the best advisors should be reserved for juniors and seniors (i.e., the department's *real* majors), most department heads support University College's invitation to faculty to become UC advisors.

All new UC advisors must choose an advisor mentor. UC provides training of new advisors in spring and summer for the following fall which both new advisors and their mentors are required to attend. The requirement for the mentors underscores the seriousness attached to this activity. Their fund of advising anecdotes also serves to personalize issues and to emphasize the need for certain rules and policies. Not incidentally, during the meeting the mentors themselves always learn some rules, regulations, and policy changes.

To update advisors on changes, UC hosts a breakfast meeting at the beginning of each academic year. (Food effectively garners a consistently high turnout of faculty advisors.) Each new advisor receives an advisor's handbook (updated yearly) and a three-ring binder with one-page curriculum sheets for all undergraduate majors and minors. At the meeting, advisors not only hear about all changes, but they also receive written copies in fliers, the new core curriculum brochure, and their updated advisor's handbook.

UC sponsors workshops for advisors during the academic year on topics requested in annual surveys. All UC and fine arts faculty advisors, the other deans, and the academic vice president are invited to these workshops on topics such as Counseling Center services and referrals, the use of the Strong Interest Inventory and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, the use of "SIGI Plus" for career exploration, study abroad opportunities, the Honors Program, rewards and recognition for advising, and reading advisees' body language. Because of great faculty interest in receiving more information on teaching and learning styles, these topics will be included in future workshops.

Acting as students' advocate. The college acts as the UC students' broker for all changes of major, advisor, and college. Except to change to fine arts, which requires an audition, the student merely completes a very short form, and UC sets in motion the official change and the moving of the student's file from one advisor to another. Approximately 51% of Butler students change majors during their first three semesters, and they often appreciate a neutral ground to make such changes.

Advancement to the senior college. Students are usually advanced to the senior college of their majors during their fourth semester of enrollment, either after completing the core curriculum or being enrolled for the 58th semester credit hour and having at least a 2.0 grade point average (GPA) based on a 4.0 scale. Students are informed of their advancement to a particular college in an individualized letter that also tells them which core courses they have in progress and whether they have any core deficiencies.

The exception to the general advancement rule is in the College of Pharmacy, for which they must have a 2.5 GPA for automatic acceptance, though students with lower GPAs may petition for admittance. Those petitioners must compete against one another and potential transfer students for any remaining space. Those who do not succeed are counseled about other major and career choices and usually choose a major in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

2. Core Curriculum

The core curriculum was the major reason for the creation of UC in the mid-1940s. Up until the late 1960s, students in University College other than fine arts majors studied little outside of the core which consisted of more than sixty credit hours. Now as majors expand, requiring more and more hours to meet departmental and professional accreditation standards, the core has shrunk to little more than half that size.

Although Butler's general education is referred to as a core curriculum, about half of the courses fulfill requirements in five separate distribution areas. The advisors of undeclared students as well as these students themselves sometimes find it difficult to determine which core courses to take along with major exploration. In order to serve all students who may or may not be in transition to a different major, all advisors of first-year students receive a loose leaf notebook of one page descriptions of all undergraduate majors, minors, and associate degree programs.

Student progress through the core curriculum. All first-year students begin taking the core curriculum, although most begin their major programs that year as well. Some students may not finish all core requirements until the final semester before graduation, although most complete them during the first five terms.

The current core curriculum provides the necessary communications skills as early as possible, during the first year if students do not require remediation in basic writing skills. They take two semesters of freshman English and a semester of public speaking and rhetorical analysis. The emphasis on communication is reinforced by the Butler philosophy and practice of placing all students who seek freshman English in the appropriate course during the semester in which it is requested.

Undeclared majors, 15% to 20% percent of Butler's new freshmen, sign up for a preponderance of core courses before choosing a major. Although students do not have to declare a major until they register for the junior year, the core is not extensive enough for them to take only core requirements during the first two years which forces them to explore major choices.

Coordinating course offerings. With four colleges offering courses in the core and faculty from all five colleges teaching interdisciplinary courses, at one time the lack of close cooperation and careful coordination of offerings resulted in too few sections offered, courses scheduled in conflict, and others timed with only the scheduling needs of faculty in mind. For evening students, for example, five courses might be offered all on Monday night. To resolve such issues, five years ago University College was given the responsibility for coordinating the core curriculum.

University College arranges a meeting with all deans, the heads of departments offering core courses, and the registrar about two weeks before the deadline for schedule submission. Each department head reports on the number, size, and timing of sections so that offerings can be coordinated. This public disclosure has fostered an unusual spirit of cooperation in allocating resources devoted to the core curriculum.

Resources for the Core Curriculum. Growing university enrollments necessitated enrolling larger numbers of students in sections of core courses than those sections were designed to accommodate. Large sections in the only required interdisciplinary course created particular staffing problems. Strong support from the president and the vice president for academic affairs for this interdisciplinary course has been critical in pressing the other deans to yield adequate, if not always optimal, resources. The central administration and the deans not only encourage the best faculty from all colleges to teach the core and stress its importance, but also reward success in doing so during promotion and tenure considerations.

Because a number of core courses double as introductions to the majors, deans and department heads tend to consider the enrolled students as potential majors, a consideration which also helps to staff these courses. Over 50% of freshmen change their majors after admission, many as a result of a positive experience in a core course. A good core course can thus be a successful tool for recruiting prospective majors into a particular discipline.

Core curriculum revision. The core curriculum has steadily evolved with some minor changes—a new course, deletion of a course or two, a new course description or title—made from year to year. Anyone within the university may recommend a change to the Core Curriculum Council, which includes 12 faculty members, two student members, and the University College dean as an *ex officio* member.

Butler is currently in the second year of more fundamentally rethinking its core curriculum in terms of content, pedagogy, and sequencing of courses during students' undergraduate years. This is a long process, fraught with political and philosophical pitfalls. Although pilot courses are now being offered, at least another semester will pass before the task force will be ready to make a recommendation to the faculty.

3. *Student Orientation*

University College is now responsible for the academic portions of the pre-term orientation program by working with the students who develop and conduct the August pre-term orientation teaching academic skills (described in the section on retention efforts), choosing faculty orientation guides, training faculty and student orientation guides to facilitate the orientation book discussions, arranging for the orientation convocation speaker, and coordinating the small group meetings guided by the faculty and student pairs. The entire budget for these activities, however, comes from the Division of Student Affairs.

About nine years ago, the Dean of University College began assigning a book for the incoming undergraduates to read during the summer so that they would begin with a common academic experience. The book is now the focus of the opening convocation, followed by a related film and small group discussion during the orientation period and later is used as a text in the freshman composition class and perhaps in other courses as well.

Each year the orientation book is selected during the fall semester by the Core Curriculum Council from entries submitted by the faculty. Books have ranged from George Orwell's *1984* to *Gilgamesh*, *The Federalist Papers*, and Lewis Thomas' *Late Night Thoughts on Listening to Mahler's Ninth Symphony*. In 1992 the choice was Hans Koning's *Columbus: His Enterprise, Destroying the Myth*.

4. *Summer Registration / Orientation*

In addition to the pre-term orientation program, several years ago University College initiated day-and-a-half summer orientation programs to test, advise, and register incoming students with sessions for their participating family members. Rather late on the scene with this type of service, Butler's UC was able to borrow ideas from the best of the many programs in existence. As a result, very few adjustments have been necessary, and evaluations show great satisfaction on the part of participants.

This orientation program, offered three times each summer for a maximum of 200 students per session, alleviates some of the stress and uncertainty of students and their families, and tremendously eases strain on advisement and registration during fall orientation. Fees have been set to cover all direct material and faculty advisor costs of the program, but not the costs of time for the 40 or more other university personnel involved. About 80% of the incoming freshmen take advantage of this voluntary program.

5. *Advanced Placement*

University College coordinates with the departments and other colleges to award credits through advanced placement (AP), college level examination program (CLEP), and internal university advanced placement programs.

Yearly, University College asks all participating departments to review current advanced placement guidelines for the incoming students two years hence.

6. Associate Degrees

As the enrollment unit for most students in the first two undergraduate years, University College is also the enrollment unit and degree granting college for associate degrees. Butler offers only general studies degrees—the associate of arts and associate of science, having cut down from a plethora of specialized degrees over the past 10 years. Unlike Butler's typical undergraduates, most who seek these degrees are part-time, commuting, nontraditional age students. Fewer than 20 graduates per year receive associate degrees.

Special Role of University College

Priorities. While University College's responsibilities are not unique, its mission, responsibilities, and authority differ from the other colleges of Butler University. Although some of these differences weaken University College in some ways, in others these same differences actually provide strengths.

The University College dean has almost always been chosen from within the university. This dean retains tenure and rank in one of the other colleges, creating the potential for divided loyalties and political concerns. Because, perhaps, the dean is relieved of "home" college responsibilities and the home college has never, apparently, influenced the selection of the dean, thus far no problems have emerged. The nature of the position demands that the Dean of University College focus on students' needs and take an institution-wide perspective rather than assume a single-college view.

Other deans have far different priorities, ones that do not include utilization of resources for development of specialized core courses, working with underprepared or misguided students, or advisor training and ongoing workshops. They must concern themselves with enrollments in their own college majors and closely related service courses. Deans reward faculty for scholarship and classroom performance above all else. Resources are used for faculty scholarship, the creation and strengthening of their own college programs and toward development of their own junior and senior level undergraduates and graduate students. They have various professional and departmental accrediting bodies to satisfy.

University College is distinguished by not belonging to any aligned political group on campus, but rather by belonging to the entire university community. This is of great value to students, providing a "safe harbor," a politically neutral academic unit in which they can explore various options the university provides.

As departments and colleges are held accountable for enrollment numbers and for numbers of majors, they are perceived by students as wanting to hold onto them, or to wrest them away from other programs, sometimes for reasons other than the students' best academic interest. This perception makes some students quite uncomfortable to talk to the other deans about possible major changes.

One of the reasons the other deans appreciate the existence of University College is that UC deals with hundreds of inquiries and complaints which might otherwise befall their offices in a given year. If UC did not exist at Butler, the other academic offices would have to deal with the 100 to 200 contacts University College handles each week as students walk in to have their needs addressed and their parents telephone the university with their concerns. Faculty advisors also make numerous inquiries as they address the problems of their advisees. Without UC, other offices would also have to process 200 changes of major each year. Someone else would have to know the core curriculum well enough to read and decide upon numerous petitions for substitute courses or even waivers of courses to fulfill the core curriculum, mainly from transfer students. Someone else would have to conduct exit interviews with the approximately 70 freshman and sophomore students who decide to withdraw from the university and would be responsible for processing the paperwork for all the freshmen who decide to take summer school courses elsewhere.

As the only college without a faculty, University College has no natural constituencies among the faculty, no advocates willing to place the college above their departmental concerns and loyalties. University College cannot coerce other deans or department heads to give up resources for the core curriculum, advising, or orientation; furthermore, UC has very little to offer in trade to receive other resources in return.

The Dean of University College must build and rely on the support of those who understand how its mission furthers the mission of the entire university. Natural advocates are the university president and the vice-president for academic affairs. Others can be persuaded when they see how UC can serve them and their students. Faculty who enjoy the challenges and rewards of working with first- and second-year students are enthusiastic allies. In order to bring an alliance together, the Dean of University College often must educate and re-educate faculty and administration concerning its goals, programs, and successes.

Retention Efforts

University College currently runs several programs, many of which are intrusive, to enhance its retention outcomes. Last year, 85% of freshmen returned for the sophomore year, a percentage the university is striving to surpass. University College has developed a number of programs to monitor student progress and intervene when students seem to be in trouble. Among these are the Admittance on Stipulation, August Pre-term, At-Risk Early Warning System, Midterm Reports, and Academic Probation programs. In spring 1992, the university began study groups. Each of these programs is discussed below.

Admittance on stipulation. Butler has traditionally admitted a small number of students to the freshman class who are talented but marginally qualified for college work. Until four years ago, these students were admitted as non-degree seeking until they successfully completed 15 semester credit hours. Given that these students were not admitted directly into University College, they did not receive the benefits of the UC academic advising program. Butler now admits these students to UC as degree-seeking on the stipulation that they must receive a 2.0 grade point average (on a 4.0 scale) within their first 15 hours of academic credit in order to continue at the university.

Advisors are especially careful to give these students a prudently chosen balance of classes as well as detailed information on support services. In many instances, advisors suggest that students register for fewer than 15 hours in the first semester. These students are retained in much greater numbers than were those who had earlier been admitted as non-degree seeking.

At-risk Early Warning System. In effect for two years, the Early Warning System follows students' academic performance during the critical first month of university life. University College requests all instructors of freshman-level classes during the first week of classes to identify freshmen who exhibit at-risk behaviors measured by participation in class discussions, attendance, submission of class assignments on time, the quality of homework assignments, quiz results, test results, willingness to seek assistance, attitude, and motivation.

When faculty identify at-risk freshmen, University College immediately sends a letter to the student with copies to the instructor and advisor. Many minority students will have signed a waiver allowing the Director of Minority Student Affairs also to receive a copy; if so, the director will also request a conference and attempt to assist the student.

Recently, University College began to identify at-risk courses and is now meeting with the heads of departments offering first semester calculus and chemistry to work out strategies to increase student success.

Mid-term reports. At mid-term, University College receives a report on all freshmen and sophomores who are earning a C- or below.

These reports form the basis for an advisor's mid-term conference with the student to discuss strategies for improvement, strategies which are then relayed back to the instructor.

Study skills groups. In Spring 1992 the Counseling Center and University College began a new cooperative program to provide study skills groups led by trained group leaders. All undergraduate students are invited to participate; some probationary students are strongly encouraged to do so; and still others—the approximately 30 students at great risk of being declared academically ineligible—are required to attend as a condition for continuing at the university. The groups meet once a week for six weeks, covering such skills as time management, stress management, text reading, studying, note taking, and test taking. Although the effect of these structured study groups is not yet known, if they prove successful, they will probably become an extension of the August pre-term orientation with meetings during the entire fall semester.

Possible Future Changes

Butler's University College has just undergone a year-long review, requested by the university president and overseen by the Academic Programs Committee of the Faculty Assembly. Members of the review committee examined the history, mission, and current activities of University College; they interviewed faculty, administrators, and students for their views; and they identified potential changes.

The review committee recommended four directions of change: 1) to expand the role of UC to include other programs scattered throughout the university, 2) to begin new programs, 3) to strengthen current programs, and 4) to move or remove existing UC responsibilities. Although not yet discussed by the faculty and administration, if enacted these recommendations would make the following specific changes: University College would become administratively responsible for a group of programs now reporting elsewhere in the university including the honors program, study abroad programs, and all other university-wide academic programs open to all undergraduates such as semester-long concentrations, lecture series, and writing-intensive courses. As new responsibilities, University College would be charged with the development and supervision of a Teaching/Learning Center, the training of all university academic advisors, and the expansion of orientation for freshmen into a year-long program of academic skills development. Among the recommendations intended to strengthen existing UC programs is the development of a cadre of advisors specially trained to work with undeclared students, establishing a program to assist students in deciding upon a major, enriching student services through access to more testing, tutoring, assessment and counseling, and giving the dean increased authority to mobilize resources required to deliver the core curriculum. Although University College would retain certain administrative responsibilities for all entering students, another recommendation is to allow the immediate enrollment of all *declared* majors in the college of intended major.

While it is unlikely that all of these recommendations will be implemented, some changes have already begun. More and more often, University College is asked to train advisors for other colleges. UC workshops are available to the fine arts faculty, since they too, work with freshmen and sophomores. Like their UC counterparts, fine arts summer advisors must attend a short workshop the day before the students arrive. University College is also developing a proposal to start a teaching/learning center to coordinate existing tutoring efforts across campus, expand tutorial offerings, and design programs for faculty development. The administration and faculty are quite enthusiastic about its development.

University College at Butler University continues to evolve to meet the needs of undergraduate students, focusing on first- and second-year students. Implementing the proposed changes, even a few of them, will enable University College to meet its students' needs even more effectively in the future.

Chapter 7 – Constancy, Change, and Campus Politics: University College at the University of Rhode Island

Diane W. Strommer

A retrospective on the occasion of University College's twentieth anniversary in 1992 leads straight into the politics which formed, changed, and ultimately have sustained the creation and development of University College at the University of Rhode Island. To what extent one can generalize from this particular history to others is uncertain, though it is likely that as an administrative unit devoted to freshmen and sophomores—and one without faculty to boot—each University College occupies a precarious position in the institutional pecking order and is more subject to the changing vision of changing presidents, budgetary expansions or recisions, the fluctuations in the degree of concern for undergraduate education on the local or national levels, and other fortunes of time than are more traditional administrative units.

University Colleges often sit at what can be a dangerous intersection between academic affairs and student affairs. Especially in a research university, this can make the operation of a University College rather a schizophrenic business, attending to the diverse day-to-day, expanding needs of beginning students on the one hand while coping with sometimes incompatible and often shifting institutional emphases and directions on the other.

In the early 1970s, like most institutions of higher education around the country the University of Rhode Island was still assessing the effects of the various student movements of the 1960s, exploring ways better to meet the needs of changing populations of students, looking at the end of a period of rapid expansion, and recognizing that expansion had not always taken place with the best interests of undergraduates in mind.

While students have always assumed that college attendance would lead to employment, the increasing numbers of college graduates in the marketplace strengthened the connection between major choice and job opportunities. Where once employers happily trained the English major with a Bachelor of Arts degree to become a marketing expert, now they wanted someone precisely educated in the desired skills. Employer slotting in turn led to the rapid shift of student interest from one major to another and often away from the traditional arts and sciences fields to the professional ones. Interest in education tumbled while demand for accounting rose. Universities nationwide struggled, and still do, to manage the disparity between shifting student interests and allocated resources. These shifts, difficult enough to handle in a period of growth, become virtually impossible when resources dwindle.

Like many institutions, the University of Rhode Island attempted to cope with the problem up front by matching students with major at the time of admission through a quota system. The notion behind this simple form of enrollment management was if the department of chemical

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engineering, say, could handle only eighty students, then after calculating for attrition and other factors, admitting twenty-five or so freshmen as its quota would meet the department's needs—and, incidentally, the freshmen's. Other well-qualified applicants would be turned down or directed to other programs in the university.

Although it had been a long-standing institutional practice, the quota system didn't work and came under increasingly severe criticism. Seventeen- and eighteen-year-olds rarely have a sufficiently clear notion of what a career field entails to make a sensible choice during their senior year in high school. They choose on the basis of myth, of prestige, of advice and often on the basis of misguided notions of their own intellectual skills and personal interests as well. They are undecided. They change their minds. The quota system not only forced a premature and uninformed career choice upon students, but if they made a mistake, the system also mitigated against transfer from one college to another, from one department to another.

Because a stable choice of major was assumed, colleges within the university had different admissions standards, requiring, for example, more high school math and science courses for those selecting engineering than for those selecting sociology. The result was, of course, a disparity among admissions standards from program to program which exacerbated the difficulty of changing majors after admission. While it was relatively easy to trade down from more difficult to easier majors, trading up was all but impossible, which particularly discouraged late bloomers or the talented student who was educationally disadvantaged.

Early in the presidency of Werner Baum (1968-1973), two separate committees were charged with studying the quota system. In a rare display of institutional unanimity, after a twenty-month study both recommended the abandonment of the quota system and the creation of a University College as a positive step to provide students with the guidance needed to make informed choices of courses and major. Instead of entering one of URI's seven undergraduate colleges, students were to be directed to a single university-wide college for up to two years of study while they explored and tested their interests and intellectual abilities with the help of special advisors.

Conceived of as an administrative structure rather than "a functional college in the conventional sense," University College would have neither a faculty nor a curriculum, but would rather be responsible for coordinating the activities of faculty advisors drawn from the other colleges and for maintaining academic student services. University College's mission was, in short, to provide the best possible academic advising. As President Baum later commented, the advantages of the new system were that it would:

- Provide more uniform and, therefore, more satisfactory and equitable standards of admission;
- Permit students to defer their choice of major until they have a more informed basis for judgment;
- Accommodate, "in a positive way," those students whose educational goals are other than career preparation;
- Stimulate interest in student advising by faculty and other professional staff; and
- Reduce the necessity for and the stigma of transferring between colleges within the university.

In recommending the university college concept, the campus self-study group told the president, "It is unrealistic to expect all entering freshmen to have well formulated goals for their undergraduate years, and it is even more unrealistic to expect them to know, with any degree of certainty, which role they will ultimately fill in the economy and society. High school graduates," the report continues, "are under tremendous social and family pressures to obtain a college education. For many, the decision to apply to a given college and curriculum is characterized by superficial reasoning, poorly defined expectations and objectives, and routine advisement. For some, the decision is made by others. This is not a suitable environment for firm commitment." Students who do have clear educational or professional goals, on the other hand, will be encouraged to pursue them "as rapidly and directly as possible, subject to educational requirements established by the various college faculties."

The report of the committees was prophetic both in charting the future course of the college and in identifying the sources of likely problems and hence is worth quoting at some length:

> The University College, both committees agree, should be headed by a dean whose qualifications will be similar to the deans of the other undergraduate colleges. The staff of the college will include 50-60 faculty advisors who will serve part-time and a small number of subject matter specialists who will serve full-time on a continuing basis. The faculty members will be selected on the basis of ability and interest and will serve for appointed terms. (Committee reports in the papers of President Werner Baum, Archives of the University of Rhode Island Library)

The critical matter of rewarding advisors which has plagued most advising programs, however they are structured, was thoughtfully addressed:

> Their teaching responsibilities will be reduced, probably by one course per year, in return for their service as advisors; and the colleges from which they come will be compensated in exchange for their participation. This arrangement is absolutely essential, for experience at other colleges and universities makes plain that an effective advisory system cannot be created where faculty advisors are employed in addition to their contractual responsibilities for added compensation. It will be absolutely essential also that successful service as an advisor counts as much as success in other areas of academic endeavor when it comes to rewards, that is, salary increases, promotion, and tenure. Without such assurance the University College will be doomed for a start, for service would be detrimental to faculty members' professional development.

The designers of University College also realized that faculty advisors alone were insufficient and recommended a core of "specialists":

> The subject matter specialists, whose status will be analogous to administrative assistants, are needed to lend continuity to the work of the University College and to provide an expertise that none of the faculty members could ever be expected to acquire. They will possess precise information about the academic programs and requirements of the colleges and the university, about the requirements for admission to graduate and professional schools, about the opportunities open to persons with particular disciplinary backgrounds and interests, etc. The faculty advisors typically will refer students who encounter unusual problems or who need special assistance to these specialists.

And, finally, they saw the need for close ties with traditional student affairs offices:

> In addition to these two groups within the University College, the dean logically should draw upon the personnel of three existing divisions of the university to assist students—Career Planning and Placement, the Counseling Center, and the Dean of Students Office. . . . However, these divisions would retain their existing identity and places within the university's organizational structure. The staff of the University College would merely seek to relate their functions more directly than at present to the academic advisory system.

In a footnote, the committee also noted that "the dean, the full-time staff, and the advisory information files should be located at a central and readily accessible place on the campus," where it would also be "highly desirable" to have space for faculty advisors, "several offices that advisors could use in shifts."

The plan to establish a University College was readily embraced by President Werner Baum, who saw it as a change that would have "profound implications upon the opportunities we afford to thousands of students," one which he came to identify as "the single most important academic innovation" of his administration. Approved by the Board of Regents in December of 1971, by May 1972 a social psychologist at the university, Dr. Bernice Lott, was appointed the first dean. Beginning in the fall of 1972, all freshmen would be required to enroll in the University College.

Change does not come easily to higher education, and although the new college was strongly supported, it had its critics as well. In July of 1971, the vice president for academic affairs had privately expressed his reservations to the president: "The basic problem that confronts the university is having an adequate and effective advising system. The fact that students do not make use of the advising system will not be corrected by establishing a University College. The fact that faculty members do not make themselves readily available to students who seek advice will not be corrected by the establishment of a University College." Whether a structural change could resolve these problems remained to be seen.

Faculty support was clearly a key. Dean Lott was later to recall that "anyone on this campus in spring of 1972 with a sensitive ear could not help but pick up the negative feelings being expressed to the idea of University College; these ranged from apoplectic hostility to derision. I have been informed by more than one faculty advisor that their assignment to UC, that first year of our existence, was done with words like these 'Go on over there; it's a joke; it won't last long; no need to take it seriously'."

It has always been easier to expound on the significance of good faculty advising than to make it happen. Two issues related to rewards for advising became the focus of faculty objections to University College: the expenditure of their time and their compensation. Although custom has quieted the objections, the issues were never resolved, not surprising given that they are at the heart of higher education's most persistent dilemma: how we can persuade faculty to give undergraduate students the time and attention they need when we reward them most for the time spent in research.

The perspective that created University College was the students'; it was structured for their convenience, to meet their needs as freshmen. The availability of faculty to advise which had concerned the vice president was, in fact, forced by the new structure. Faculty advisors were required to advise in University College's offices. Admittedly convenient to students who could now count on their advisors being at a given place at a given time, some faculty had a different view. Sometimes their appointment calendar in University College was filled or over-filled; sometimes they sat idly for an hour or more, thinking of the research to be done, the lecture to be prepared, the time being "wasted." Over the years, better orientation of students to advising, telephone registration, and additional advising tasks have largely smoothed out the peaks and valleys of student appointments that used to characterize the semester, and few faculty complain about wasting time in University College these days.

Money, or to put it more accurately and less crassly, rewarding faculty for time spent advising was the second issue. The original plan, had it been fully implemented, probably would have worked. While some faculty were "paid" for time spent advising in University College by releasing them from teaching one course a semester or a year, depending on the number of hours spent advising, departments were not reimbursed. Some strenuously objected to the arrangement as debased currency. Some faculty argued that the further spread of this release time device as a method of "paying" for needed services must be stopped and reversed. These faculty argued that it is a purely counterfeit currency, because the release time surrendered usually tends to be covered by increasing enrollments in already existing classes; and therefore, the end result is higher enrollments, worsening student-teacher ratios, loss of teaching talent from the classroom, and in this case a watered-down advisory program.

Others questioned the expense of the "administrative apparatus" of the college, despite its modest size for a unit with over 5,000 students (one dean, one assistant to the dean, two clerical positions, and two part-time student workers). In response to this objection, Dean Lott commented, "This 'apparatus' is attempting to do what faculty members, on their own, have not generally done and are not easily able to do. It can be assumed that it was the Faculty Senate's recognition that something more was needed to engage the interest and develop the potential of our new students that resulted in its approval of the University College plan."

Despite such rumblings, with the help of an implementation officer and guidelines drafted by the Dean's Council to clarify some ambiguities in responsibilities, University College became the administrative home to the freshmen entering the university in the fall of 1972. By the end of that academic year, the last of Werner Baum's presidency, University College had acclimated its first class to university life.

Not surprisingly, the evaluations from students were highly positive. While a few felt they didn't need the assistance of any advisor, this student's comment is more representative: "I believe University College is the best thing that has happened here at University of Rhode Island. Most other offices on campus are unsympathetic to student needs. In contrast, UC helps the student and gets things done at the same time." What students valued were the welcoming atmosphere of the college, the help afforded to freshmen, the expertise of advisors, and their availability. Less tangible, but often alluded to in the student evaluations, was the comfort University College afforded. As one student put it,

> I was very unsure of myself when coming to college. . . . University College has made many of my friends as well as me feel very comfortable in the university atmosphere. Whenever I have a problem or whatever, I feel I can make an appointment to see my advisor and feel confident that good advice will be given me. [My advisor] is a very personable person, especially interested in me as an individual not only as a University College student.

Others commented on University College's relationship to a liberal education:

> One is made aware of a broad cross-section of ideas in relation to career goals rather than concentrating immediately on an objective to the exclusion of all else.

Many of the faculty advisors reiterated the students' comments, noting that "students drop in without appointments for what sometimes turn into extended discussions of the merits of various career possibilities, major issues in the field, or the need for more sections of a course." They also found that advising in University College had another, unexpected benefit. As a faculty member from the Department of Psychology commented,

> [University College] also serves another function—it educates me. I am tuned in to the kinds of student problems which should affect department policy. New courses have been offered, new sections opened, updating of the university bulletin listings undertaken, a handbook for new majors compiled, career panel discussions held—all largely as a result of student input through UC advisors. Without UC, such input would have been less centralized, less noticed, and less effective.

The college structure also gave undergraduate education an administrative voice on campus it had not had before, a spokesperson in the tenure and promotion process to make advising count—if not much, at least some—and a system of training, supporting, and evaluating advising. University College also became something of a hub for freshman who spent time there not just meeting with their advisors but also studying in its adjoining lounge, participating in its offering of mini-courses or the few social events planned each term. Whatever turmoil University College experienced in the realm of campus politics, its day-to-day services on behalf of students remained stable.

After a year under an acting president, the university welcomed Frank Newman to the campus in 1974 as its eighth president. With the ominous signs of increasingly tight state budgets ahead, one of his first acts was to create a Budget Task Force to examine all programs within the university in order to recommend ways of generating additional and new income, to effect economies of operation, to recommend procedures, programs, policies and the like that would result in a "creative and judicious use of university resources" and to identify those that would stimulate the growth and development of the university.

In the fall of 1974, a subcommittee of the Budget Task Force was "asked to examine the operations of the University College and to explore whether there are alternate ways of meeting the advisor services more efficiently or at lower cost to the university." In the course of their deliberations, the sub-committee rejected an initial recommendation to discontinue University College and instead wrote:

> The committee wishes to affirm the value of University College as a vitally efficient means for insuring that undergraduate students are given the best possible assistance toward making sound educational decisions. University College must be evaluated from the perspective of what existed prior to its creation. Today, all but the severest critics of University College will admit that prior to the development of University College, undergraduate advisement, particularly at the freshman and sophomore level, was a severe problem on this campus.

This sub-committee pointed out a number of ways in which University College achieved its intended purposes such as articulating the goals of general education to students, providing a meeting ground to increase the sense of student community, serving an ombudsman function to trouble-shoot student problems and to expedite their resolution, and some unexpected results. Faculty advisors in University College discovered that service in University College provided a rare opportunity to meet faculty from other fields, and the entire campus benefited from UC's research and planning function. "We are now," the chair reported, "in a position to anticipate and plan for enrollment shifts in academic programs. Much information about students' interests, academic plans, and reactions to the university experience have been obtained through University College."

Although the report of the sub-committee offered thirteen recommendations to modify the mission of the college, none were implemented at that time. The effect would have been to allow "decided" students to move more quickly into their degree colleges, to have advisors represent broad areas of the curriculum rather than specific departments or majors, and to assign the University College Dean the responsibility for coordinating academic advising university-wide. The report also recommended bringing together into University College a number of special inter-college academic programs, programs including honors, general education, the Instructional Development Program, Freshman Orientation, Special Programs for Talent Development (a program for minority and disadvantaged students), and "other programs as appropriate."

No specific action pertaining to University College was taken as a result of the Budget Task Force recommendations with the exception of moving administrative responsibility for the Special Programs for Talent Development from the Vice President for Academic Affairs to the Dean of University College. And despite the general affirmation of University College resulting from its first review, the criticism by its detractors surfaced sporadically through the 70s, growing along with the university's worsening budget situation. Although neither its cost—nor cost-effectiveness—was ever truly analyzed, questions about University College being a worthwhile expenditure continued to come up, and the college was under attack every year or so for a while, sometimes by faculty or administrators of the professional colleges but more often by members of the state's governing board for higher education.

But the report also commented that University College had been unable to resolve the inherent contradiction between "the significance attached to the advising process and the importance of advising as a faculty endeavor" on the one hand and the "actual fact it has not been considered very important at any level of administration as there is no place in the reward or merit system assigned to advising. . . . If more than lip service is to be paid to the importance of advising then a real recognition of it must be forthcoming." The report suggested several changes to highlight advising, including the designation of twenty budgeted "university advisors" to represent whole academic areas with consultant advisors from each department, and others to strengthen the college such as assigning the responsibility for running University College to an assistant dean and giving the dean responsibility for other programs as well. Its final recommendation was to allow students earlier transfer into the degree colleges, particularly the professional colleges.

While the search for a permanent new dean was put on hold, the Vice President asked for a thorough review of the Haas report by the university community. Although the report had affirmed the value of University College, in the spring of 1979 he charged the Faculty Senate Committee responsible for overseeing University College to explore these four options: 1) to discontinue University College, 2) to continue it without change, 3) to continue it, but to allow students to transfer to a degree college at any time including their first semester or to allow transfer after the second but before the fourth semesters, or 4) to give entering students the option of enrolling in University College or a degree college.

Assuming the college's continuation, the committee was also asked to consider whether certain additional programs and responsibilities should be moved into University College including University Year for Action (a credit-bearing internship program), Honors program, Study Abroad, Urban Affairs, special internships, a learning skills center (if one should be established), freshman orientation, an undergraduate fellowship and scholarship committee, black studies and other interdisciplinary undergraduate programs which do not have a college home, and the general education program development. Finally, they were asked to consider whether to add a career planning component to University College, to have "more intensively prepared advisors," and to permit advising at locations other than University College.

Students, as usual, remained largely ignorant of or oblivious to these deliberations, continuing to keep the halls of University College humming as they met with their advisors for assistance on matters ranging from the trivial to the life-changing—from how to drop a course, which course to take for the social science area, whether to seek an internship, how to deal with a sticky roommate problem, to whether to withdraw from the university altogether. Then as now, most students sought advisors' help two to three times a semester, and many had more frequent meetings.

After examining all the options, the Faculty Senate Committee's sole recommendation for change to the full Senate was to permit earlier transfer to the degree colleges—after completing 24 credits rather than 45. Subjected to three intensive reviews in less than a decade, University College's value to students and the institution was affirmed, and a new dean was hired in August of 1980. No longer an experiment, University College moved more confidently into the more confident 80s. President Newman announced his resignation and in 1983, the ninth president of the university, Dr. Edward D. Eddy was installed.

Like the nation, Rhode Island and its university enjoyed the illusion of prosperity in the 80s, and University College's place was sufficiently assured that its staff was modestly increased and other programs were approved for affiliation with it, as had long been proposed. The dean's title was changed in 1983 to Dean of University College and Special Academic Programs to reflect the increased administrative responsibility. Besides Study Abroad, which grew from an information service provided by a graduate assistant through a stage in which a part-time faculty member and the dean developed specific URI programs to having a full-fledged office with a director and advisor by the early 90s, in 1983 the dean assumed responsibility for the Office of Internships, including a credit-bearing internship program, University Year for Action, and in 1987 for the Learning Assistance Center which expanded from a counseling service to a full-fledged tutorial and supplemental instruction program through a Board of Governors' Excellence Grant from 1988-1990. In 1983 URI joined the National Student Exchange program on campus with UC/SAP as its home; in 1986, a program of academic counseling for athletes was developed.

Simultaneously, as the university sought out-of-state students to compensate for the declining numbers of Rhode Island high school graduates, University College was increasingly perceived as an institutional strength, a way to provide a programmatic focus for the transitional freshman year and to foster student retention. Creating and administering retention programs also became part of University College's mission, and freshman-to-sophomore-year retention rates steadily improved throughout the decade. The college was recognized in 1983 with an American College Testing Program/National Academic Advising Association (ACT/NACADA) Award in part for its incorporation of faculty into retention programs.

Campus support of University College strengthened during the early and mid 80s, its contributions to students and campus life increasingly viewed as an institutional asset. The report of an external team of consultants, Peat, Marwick, and Mitchell, shocked the campus, therefore, as few previous reports had done.

Invited by the president in November 1986 ostensibly to analyze the structure of the central administration, when the Peat, Marwick, and Mitchell team presented their recommendations to the campus community and to the Board of Governors for Higher Education late in March of 1987, few were prepared for their breadth. Among the many recommendations was the creation of a Division of Student Development to replace the old Division of Student Affairs, a division whose mission would be central to the academic purposes of the university. While University College's role was not clearly spelled out, the implication was to replace the college with a centralized advising office as part of a modified enrollment management whose mission would be central to the academic purposive unit to include admissions, financial aid, and the registrar's office, a unit to be located in the new Division of Student Development.

An April 23, 1987 article in the student newspaper suggests some of the turmoil which was to ensue over the next year. Under the headline, "Faculty Adamant for UC," the article summarizes events to that point:

> At last week's special Faculty Senate meeting addressing the results of a five-month study of organization and management, professors from all corners of the campus voiced their opposition to the study's implied changes concerning University College.
>
> The study hinted at a new organizational scheme which plans to delete University College from existence and suggested returning the university to an older way of advising students . . . . Various senators and professors with President Edward D. Eddy on hand, spoke out against such changes and repeatedly expressed support for University College. One senator summed up the protests by saying, "Don't mess with success."

Whatever the intention of the Peat, Marwick, and Mitchell report, no plan to eliminate University College ever surfaced. Instead, at the fall convocation President Eddy proposed moving University College and Special Academic Programs to the new Division of Student Development as its academic heart. Despite reservations expressed by the Board of Governors for Higher Education, by the New England Association of Schools and College's accreditation team, which noted the lack of understanding of the rationale for the movement of University College, and by its own sub-committees, the president persuaded the Faculty Senate to approve the transfer in January 1988. The Board of Governors concurred.

Neither approval was unconditional. Each mandated a review to take place in 1992-93. Now nearing completion, that review will recommend the return of University College to Academic Affairs where its mission continues to find its logical home.

Although the Student Senate drafted a resolution opposing the transfer of University College, only the most politically astute students knew it had occurred, and even they quickly forgot as

University College continued to function much as always. Closer ties were indeed forged with the Counseling Center, joint programs for undecided students developed with the Office of Career Services, and orientation programs assumed a more academic bent. But even before President Eddy announced his intention to retire at the end of the 1990-91 academic year, it was clear that in the constrained budgetary climate, the prospect of a greatly enhanced, more academic role for the Division of Student Development was unlikely. The relatively prosperous '80s were over.

Robert L. Carothers arrived as the tenth president of the university in time to celebrate its centennial year in 1992 and to confront an ever-worsening higher education budget. This time, however, no one has yet suggested that the elimination of University College would ameliorate the problem. Increasingly, University College is recognized as an institutional strength, though precisely how the college will function in the president's bold new vision for restructuring the university remains unknown. The current administration seems inclined to return University College to Academic Affairs where its mission continues to find its logical home, but that determination will be made following the Faculty Senate review.

More important is University College's continued concern for helping freshmen make an appropriate academic transition to university life. This fall, freshmen received mid-semester academic progress reports for the first time, a change which University College initiated and saw through an initially resistant Faculty Senate. Plans for next year include a major initiative to make the freshman year truly transformational by developing programs to prepare students to become fully engaged learners. Faculty and staff committees are exploring ways to strengthen the academic components of the summer orientation program, to continue that orientation through a long fall freshman weekend, to offer a series of freshman seminars, and to engage freshmen in research projects.

Created to meet the needs of beginning university students, University College's mission continues unaltered, as twenty years of URI students can attest. As a student recently wrote on one of the feedback forms, "University College has really helped me. My advisor was supportive and firm, gave me information and understanding but also my own space to make good choices." Continuously improving its programs and services to assist students to make good choices and become more confident learners has been University College's mission throughout its history.

Chapter 8 – Supporting Students in the Historically Black University

Fran Johnson

Prior to the 1970s, the African-American student population at Alabama A&M University and at other historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) was characterized by a healthy cross-section of the black community, both academically and socially. At that time, approximately 90% of black high school graduates who enrolled in college attended an historically black institution. By the late 1980s that percentage had dropped to 40% (Fleming, 1984), but despite this sharp decline in the percentage of black students enrolled in historically black colleges and universities, these institutions continue to grant three-quarters of the baccalaureate degrees among blacks because of the high attrition rates for blacks at traditionally white colleges (Fleming, 1984).

By the 1980s historically white institutions, eager to demonstrate their compliance with desegregation and affirmative action statutes, were siphoning off not only the most promising young black scholars, but many other academically capable African-American students as well (*Fighting for*, 1981). This "brain drain" development of the 1960s and 1970s, caused what had been a broad base representation of the black community at HBCUs to narrow considerably. Harold L. Hodgkinson (1987) comments on the dilemma facing HBCUs:

> Now that everybody wants really talented Black students the [H]BIs have not been able to attract the top end of the Black ability level that it always had access to before. I really do expect that a small number of them will disappear or, even more likely, that there will be some mergers and acquisitions in higher education.

Competition for the top black students left most HBCUs with little choice but to enroll greater numbers of students who were academically underprepared for college-level studies, students who were often not retained to graduation.

Before the matter of maintaining enrollments was threatened by an insufficient supply of traditional college-age students, the assumption pervading most attrition research was that the student who cannot make it in college is somehow flawed. Some studies presented evidence of the importance of intellectual attributes in the individual's ability to meet the academic demands of college life (Summerskill, 1962; Marks, 1967). Other reports emphasized the roles personality, motivation, and disposition play in the student's efforts to meet the requirements of institutions of higher learning (Hielbrun, 1965; Rose & Elton, 1966; Rossmann & Kirk, 1970; and Waterman & Waterman, 1972). During this period, the failure of students to remain in college and the causal factors for their departure were attributed to the students themselves or factors external to the institutions. A lack of effective advising for more curricular options and the shrinking number of traditional college-age students, however, resulted in declining

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enrollments. Institutions threatened with becoming an endangered species are more willing to change and more receptive to the recent research on student retention which examines institutional as well as individual factors contributing to student success, satisfaction, and persistence (Tinto, 1987).

Although a significant percentage of students entering all institutions of higher education demonstrate a lack of competence in the core skill areas, this phenomenon is of particular concern for institutions with liberal admissions policies, such as Alabama A&M University. Together with the inability of underfunded public HBCUs to compete effectively with predominantly white institutions for academically talented African-American students through offering substantial scholarships and lucrative financial aid packages or to entice a sufficient number of white students to attend what they perceive as inferior institutions, such policies result in these institutions enrolling a disproportionate percentage of students who are academically underprepared for college-level studies. National attrition data indicate a linear relationship between college persistence and admission selectivity, with liberal and open admissions institutions experiencing freshman-to-sophomore dropout rates in excess of 40% as compared to 10% to 20% for highly selective and selective admission institutions, respectively (Noel, Levitz, & Saluri, 1985; American College Testing Program [ACT], 1988).

Historical Perspective

Unlike most historically black universities and many other institutions of higher education in the 1970s, Alabama A&M University was characterized by a sizeable international undergraduate enrollment which peaked at nearly 20% of the total student body. In the 1980s, this population which had assisted Alabama A&M University in sustaining a viable student enrollment began to decline. The continuing "brain drain" of black students, the increasing percentage of academically "at risk" students admitted to the institution, the declining number of international students, the escalating student attrition rate, and the growing concern about the institution's survival resulted in Alabama A&M's becoming proactive in addressing student retention and quality learning issues.

Confronted with a freshman-to-sophomore attrition rate of greater than 50% as well, Alabama A&M University joined universities across the nation in recognizing that greater attention must be directed toward the retention of students. University officials agreed that it is more cost-effective to hold on to currently-enrolled students than to recruit greater numbers of students, especially from new populations and locations. In the late 1970s they developed the initial guidelines for an academic component specifically to address the educational and other special needs of lower level students. The institution deliberated long, however, before formalizing the concept.

The first major action occurred in 1981 when an Academic Advising and Counseling Program was established with the director reporting to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Initially, this program was responsible for advising only undeclared majors and serving as a resource for addressing the advising concerns of academic departments. In 1983, the Academic Advising and Counseling Program, Testing Services, Developmental Education and Special Programs were subsumed under the Lower Division, a newly established academic unit supported by Title III funds and supervised by a director who reported to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. At this time, a committee with campus-wide representation was charged with the responsibility of defining the role, function, and structure for a broad-base unit to assist lower level students to persist and succeed at Alabama A&M University.

During its deliberations, the committee obtained input from the university community through use of a questionnaire which covered issues involving advising responsibility, required course of study, and transfer criteria for students assigned to the lower division. The committee also looked at models in existence at several other HBIs to be sure that the elements for the proposed structure, although specific to the needs of Alabama A&M University, coincided with units at other similar institutions.

The outgrowth of the deliberations at Alabama A&M University was the establishment of a Division of General Studies in 1985, supported primarily with Title III funds. At the time, the institution was in a period of administrative transition and reorganization, and apart from a new title for the lower division no other substantive action was taken to provide greater responsibility and accountability for student success and persistence at the institution. Another important step in the development of this unit came three years later, when the unit was assigned responsibility for advising all freshmen and institutional funds were allocated to Division of General Studies to implement a freshman tutoring program. Although the essential support programs and services were subsumed under the Division of General Studies, the unit lacked administrative authorization to address adequately the quality control/assurance issues identified earlier.

Finally, in 1989, the Division of General Studies was upgraded to a University College. Admittedly, the change in role and scope could have occurred under the former rubric; however, the change in name provided a clear signal to the campus community that the lower level concept had senior level administrative endorsement and support. Additionally, the change in status substantiated the institution's serious commitment to address the high freshman-to-sophomore attrition rate and to improve the academic performance of students entering degree-granting programs. In developing this structure, Alabama A&M University created a unit which is structurally somewhere to the right of the midpoint on the continuum of lower level units at HBCUs (see Table 1).

Lower level units at Historically Black Institutions

Table 1 presents a succinct comparison of differences and similarities between lower-division programs at a number of selected institutions which have historically or traditionally served African-American students including Alabama State University, Alcorn State University, Florida A&M University, Tennessee State University, Jackson State University, Stillman College, Southern University, Winston-Salem State University, and the University of District of Columbia. Although the overall goals and objectives and many specific elements of units which serve lower level students are quite similar, differences unique to particular HBCU campus environments, institutional priorities, and local politics are evident.

Although differences exist between the role and functions of these lower-division units, 87% to 100% are responsible for the developmental education, general education, academic advising, new student orientation, and learning/skills centers at their institutions. Seventy-five percent of these units also have an honors program. One or more TRIO programs, testing and assessment activities, and pre-college and/or college-level early intervention programs are subsumed under the lower division at 63% of the institutions examined. In the schools sampled, all unit supervisors, of whom 75% are deans, report to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

More detailed information is presented on Alabama State University's University College and Alcorn State University's General College for Excellence because the administrative units at these two institutions represent opposite ends on the organizational continuum for lower-division structures at HBCUs.

The University College at Alabama State University, responsible for all students at both the freshman and sophomore levels, is organized into four areas: 1) Department of Advancement Studies; 2) Department of Humanities; 3) Department of Math and Science; and 4) Academic Advisement Center. Supervised by a dean who reports to the Vice President of Academic Affairs, the mission of the University College at this institution states a commitment to a quality general collegiate education for students entering with varied ability levels and academic preparation.

The Department of Advancement Studies offers pre-college instruction in English, mathematics, speech, study skills, and reading skills through its Developmental Reading Program, TRIO Programs, and 4 Plus Curriculum Program. This department also conducts the Freshman Orientation Program and provides skill development centers in reading and speech. General education courses in science and mathematics are offered by the Department of Math and Science via the Mathematics and Science Tutorial Center. The Department of Humanities offers general education courses in English, history, geography, and humanities and operates the Writing Center and the History and Geography Tutorial Center.

The University College also includes the Academic Advisement Center, which provides advising for all students during their first year of enrollment at Alabama State University. The Academic Advisement Center is staffed by professional advisors who are responsible for student retention at the freshman level and for monitoring students' progress throughout their academic program.

Of the eight historically black institutions examined, the University College at Alabama State University is the only one with separate academic departments and a faculty. The philosophy at Alabama State is that the desired instructional outcomes and student retention will be more easily attainable with faculty and chairpersons who are accountable to the dean of University College, though some faculty do have dual appointments with University College and other units.

Although similar in its commitment for providing academic programs and support services to maximize student retention and success in college, the General College for Excellence at Alcorn State University is structurally different from the program at Alabama State University. Supervised by a director who reports to the Dean of Academic Affairs, the General College enrolls approximately 1700 freshmen and sophomores. Each major component within the General College has a coordinator who reports directly to the General College director. Those coordinators, who have teaching, administrative, and other institutional responsibilities outside the College, also report to their respective department chairs and school deans.

A basic component of the General College is academic advisement conducted by faculty advisors selected and trained by the advisement coordinator. The instructional component, divided into two phases or levels, comprises another facet of the college. Level one provides opportunities for the development of basic skills in reading, English, and mathematics. Instruction in regular college level freshman and sophomore courses, including honors courses, constitutes the second level of this component. Although faculty who teach developmental and general education courses have appointments in their respective departments, the General College director collaborates with the appropriate unit heads in their selection, training, and evaluation.

At Alcorn State University, considerable attention also is given to activities which assist freshmen in acquiring academic and study skills necessary for college survival and to increase their personal development and enrichment. Additional components which address these aspects are a learning skills/tutorial center, Special Programs, and counseling and testing services.

University College at Alabama A&M University

After considering the range of options exhibited by other historically black institutions addressing similar problems, Alabama A&M University adopted the following mission and objectives for its new University College.

Mission. The University College at Alabama A&M University is responsible for the core curriculum for undergraduate degree programs in cooperation with other undergraduate schools and provides academic support services to help students succeed in college. More specifically, the unit is committed to (a) instructional programs which accommodate the varied needs of students from diverse academic backgrounds; (b) learning outcomes assessment activities; and (c) academic support services to help enrolled and prospective students achieve their educational goals. University College also serves as the point of entry for all freshmen and new transfer students and certifies their completion of requirements for entrance to degree-granting programs.

Objectives. The primary goal for the University College is to provide a comprehensive academic unit to assist entry level students acquire the requisite skills and competencies for entrance into degree-granting programs, success in upper division courses of study, and persistence in college. Specific objectives are:

1) to provide instructional and academic support programs to meet the varied intellectual needs of pre-college and lower-level college students to include ongoing evaluation of instructional effectiveness and monitoring student progress through the prescribed course of study;

2) to coordinate in conjunction with other academic units a performance-based core curriculum for undergraduate degree programs;

3) to provide students with effective academic advising to help them succeed in college and achieve their educational goals; and

4) to certify that lower level students complete the designated course of study and meet requirements for transfer to upper division degree-granting programs.

Components. The University College provides structural cohesiveness and clear focus for a single system of interrelated programs designed to stimulate and enrich the educational experiences for pre-college and matriculating lower-level students and to increase their persistence and success in college.

The University College consists of two basic components—instructional and academic support. The instructional portion includes the core curriculum, developmental education, and enhancement studies. Required to complete a minimum of twenty-three semester hours from the university and core curriculum requirements and to demonstrate reading, writing, thinking and mathematics proficiency prior to release from the college, all freshmen study the following core courses: communication skills, 6 credits; humanities-art and music, 2 credits; mathematics, 6 credits; history, 3 credits; physical science, biology, or chemistry, 3 credits; health, 2 credits; and orientation, 1 credit. This core curriculum thus provides the broad base of learning for all undergraduate major curricula.

The Developmental Education Program, another aspect of the instructional program, is designed to assist academically underprepared freshmen in acquiring reading, writing, thinking and quantitative skills at proficiency levels required for success in the regular college curriculum. Concurrent with course enrollment, individualized instruction and tutorial assistance are available in academic support laboratories as needed on the basis of referral by faculty or students themselves. Student performance on the ACT and SAT examinations provide the basis for initial placement in the Developmental Education Program; additional assessment and diagnostic activities are completed during the first week of class to confirm placement in the program and to identify specific areas of deficiency. Students remain in the developmental program until they achieve specified competency levels as measured by standardized assessment instruments. Upon satisfactory completion of developmental courses, students receive letter grades and non-degree, institutional credit.

The third aspect of the instructional component consists of enhancement studies. Some upperclass military science students, whose performance on standardized examinations indicates that they need additional instruction in communicative and quantitative skills, are required to enroll in the Enhanced Skills Training program (ESTP). The ESTP is a federally-supported program designed specifically to increase the number of commissionees from HBCUs who complete successfully the Officers' Basic Course. Additional enhancement studies are provided in a newly developed Honors Program for academically talented students who need a more intellectually challenging course of study.

University College is also responsible for the Technical Studies Program, a baccalaureate course of study which provides a non-traditional delivery system to help adult learners maximize their educational pursuits. In this program, the institution awards nontransferable degree credit for technical and vocational training as well as for experiential learning.

The academic support component includes programs and services at the pre-college and college levels. The pre-college programs include Adopt-a-Family, Upward Bound, and the North Alabama Education Opportunity Center (EOC) Campus Program. College students provide one-on-one volunteer tutoring in the homes of middle school students under the Adopt-a-Family program, a state-supported initiative to help children stay in school. The federally-funded Upward Bound program is designed to enhance and enrich the learning experiences of high school students by providing Saturday morning and summer instruction in reading, writing, mathematics, science, typing, music, and art, undergirded by personal and academic counseling and cultural enrichment activities. The campus-based EOC program provides counseling and academic assistance to non-traditional adult learners who are interested in furthering their formal education.

Academic support programs and services at the college level include the Academic Advising Program, Testing Services, Student Support Services and Academic Assistance (tutoring) Program. The New Student Orientation Program offers summer and preschool orientation sessions for new freshmen and transfer students. During these sessions, prospective students have the opportunity to become acquainted with campus life, administrators, faculty, and student leaders. Assessment and placement, academic advising and scheduling, and registration activities are also part of the New Student Orientation Program.

Academic Advising, a major responsibility of the college, provides advising and scheduling assistance to all freshmen, declared and undeclared majors, special students, and new transfers. Full-time professional advisors work cooperatively with selected faculty advisors to ensure that students are properly advised about freshman core requirements, university regulations and academic standards, departmental and school requirements, and career opportunities in their major areas. The Academic Advising Center staff approves all advising and scheduling transactions for assigned students and systematically monitors their academic performance and progress.

University College advisors also have weekly contact with new freshman advisees in a mandatory, one semester, freshman orientation course and meet individually with assigned students at least twice during the semester. The Advising Center encourages and sponsors planned opportunities for new freshmen to interact with faculty in their intended fields of study as well. Students who are undeclared majors participate in structured career exploration activities which make extensive use of the Career Awareness Laboratory.

Providing for the assessment and placement needs of students enrolled in University College is a major responsibility of the Testing Services, which also functions as a national and local test center for various agencies and as an institutional resource for test information and assessment support. Intensive counseling, peer and video tutoring, and computer literacy are provided for 210 students who are selected for participation in the federally-funded Student Support Services (SSS) program. Upon admission to the university, students who were "upward bounders" in high school are automatically enrolled in SSS along with other students who are considered to be at risk because they come from low-income backgrounds, are first generation college-goers, or meet other criteria identified by the federal government.

The Academic Assistance Program provides a three-prong comprehensive tutoring approach. The first prong involves "high-risk" students who are enrolled in developmental courses and who receive tutorial assistance through the

Early Alert System. At six-week intervals, developmental faculty complete computerized academic progress cards for students who are performing below a "C" average and indicate the need for individual tutoring in specific content, concept, or skill areas. The program coordinator contacts each student and arranges a schedule for tutoring sessions. Students whose unsatisfactory academic performance seems to be related to poor class attendance, lack of motivation, test anxiety, or a combination of these are referred to the counseling center.

The second prong uses the Supplemental Instruction (SI) model developed by the Center for Academic Development at the University of Missouri, Kansas City (Martin & Arendale, 1992). The SI approach shifts the emphasis from identification of "high-risk" students to identification of "high-risk" courses and attaches tutorial services directly to "high-risk" courses, designated as those courses in which student grades of "Ds", "Fs", and withdrawal rates exceed 30% of the total number of course registrants. Upperclassmen who have successfully completed the courses designated as "high-risk" attend the course lectures, where they take notes, complete assigned readings, and conduct several fifty-minute SI sessions per week for small groups of students. The third prong provides traditional one-to-one peer tutoring to any freshman on a drop-in or teacher-referral basis.

Exit Criteria. Students remain in University College until they satisfy specific exit criteria. They must:

1) demonstrate competence in the basic areas of reading, writing, logical reasoning, and mathematics as measured by the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency examination and/or other departmental and standardized assessment tools;

2) complete a minimum of 23 credit hours from the university and core curriculum requirements;

3) declare a major; and

4) meet all requirements for admission to a degree-granting major within one of the five undergraduate schools.

Students who have not satisfied requirements for exit from University College cannot enroll in courses higher than the sophomore level without approval through appropriate channels.

Faculty and Academic Support Staff. University College provides a way to measure progress toward achievement of its program objectives and brings together faculty and staff responsible for delivery of instruction and support services to lower-level students. All academic support staff are assigned to University College. Faculty who teach developmental and core courses have appointments in their discipline areas, and the University College dean collaborates with appropriate unit heads in making instructor assignments and in faculty development and evaluation activities. In cooperation with the respective units, University College is also responsible for planning and assessing instructional activities related to the developmental program and the core curriculum.

Conclusion

The single system of interrelated programs and services subsumed under the University College is designed to impact Alabama A&M University in three major ways: 1) by increasing the number of students who persist and succeed in college beyond the freshman year; 2) by improving the quality of students entering degree-granting programs; and 3) by providing a quality control/assurance mechanism to help the university demonstrate institutional effectiveness in student outcomes assessment.

There is considerable discussion in the literature about the importance of student satisfaction in the persistence of young people in college (Fleming, 1984; Noel, Levitz, & Saluri 1985; Tinto, 1987). The findings of the American Freshman and Follow-up Survey, administered by the Higher Education Research Institute under the auspices of the Cooperative Institutional Research Program at the University of California Los Angeles, completed initially by the entire Alabama A&M University Fall 1989 Freshman Class and a random sample of the original sample in 1991, suggest a dramatic shift in their level of satisfaction. On entering in 1989, only 42.5% of the new freshmen group expected to be satisfied with their educational experience at Alabama A&M University, but two years later in 1991, 82.7% of the students sampled reported satisfaction with their overall educational experience. Nearly three out of four students specifically reported satisfaction with those services provided by the University College—academic tutoring, academic advising, and career advising and counseling.

The significant decline in the attrition rate at Alabama A&M University provides evidence that improved retention is a by-product of improved student satisfaction. Since the inception of the University College, the first-to-second year student attrition rate of greater than 50% has been reduced to an attrition rate of less than 20%. Among the predictable results of improving retention from the freshman to the sophomore years are increases in student enrollment in upper level core and major courses and a record high undergraduate enrollment without any significant increase in the number of new students admitted.

Of the students who complete the freshman core courses required for exiting the University College, more than 70% demonstrate mastery at the levels set by the receiving major departments in reading, English, and mathematics on the first administration of standardized assessment instruments. Those students who need additional help to pass the freshman core test battery are required to report the Academic Assistance Center for prescribed, individualized learning activities which must be completed prior to re-testing. This initiative is expected to improve the academic proficiency of students admitted to the major programs even further. Sometimes, however, it is the positive impact on individual students that is the most rewarding. This impact of University College is exemplified in the following excerpt from a parent's letter to the dean:

> I deeply appreciate your concern for new students, especially with regard to my son. . . . Although this transition from high school to college life is a difficult one . . . I am pleased with the reports I have received. . . . [My son] enjoys his classes and . . . has embraced Alabama A&M with enthusiasm. Thank you for your concern and correspondence.

The establishment of a University College represents an important endeavor to support and retain students at Alabama A&M University. The college also assists the institution in demonstrating its effectiveness by providing greater accountability for academic programs and services for first-year students.

Table 1

Lower Division Units at Selected Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Institutions	Date Est.	Unit Title	Unit Head	Target Pop.	Dev. Education	Core/General Education	Honors	Academic Advising	Orientation	Academic Counseling	Assessment/Testing	Learning Center/Skills Lab	Pre-college/College Early Intervention	Trio Programs[2]	ROTC Enhanced Skills Training Program	Professional Staff	Developmental Faculty	Core/General Faculty
Alabama State University	1975	Univ. College	Dean/VPAA[9]	Fr/So	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Alcorn State University[3]	1983	Gen. College	Director/DAA	Fr	X	X[4]	X[4]	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Florida A&M University[3]	1982	Sch. of Gen. Studies	Dean/VPAA	Fr/So	X	X		X[5]	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X[6]
Jackson State University	1987	Univ. College	Dean/VPAA	Fr/So	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X		
Southern University[3]	Early '70s	Junior Division	Dean/VPAA	Fr	X	X	X[1]	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Tennessee State University	1983[3, 7]	Univ. College	Dean/VPAA	Fr/So	X	X	X	X	X			X				X		
University of DC[3]	1979	Univ. College	Dean/VPAA	Fr	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X		
Stillman College[8]	1982	Gen. Ed. Program	Director/VPAA	Fr/So	X	X		X	X			X				X	X	

[1] includes new tranfers and special students
[2] includes Upward Bound, Talent Search, Student Support Services, Handicapped Student Services
[3] Land-grant institution
[4] initially freshman level; sophomores added in 1985
[5] only undecided majors
[6] only reading and speech faculty
[7] reorganized in 1991; separate lower division unit discontinued
[8] church-supported liberal-arts institution
[9] Vice President of Academic Affairs

Conclusion

The Differences Made

Issues for New University Colleges

References

Appendices

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Chapter 9 – The Differences Made: A Sampler and Data from Institutions with No Freshman College

Diane W. Strommer

Contributors to this chapter include Dr. Paulette Donaldson, Dean, College of General Studies, Liberty University; Dr. Scott Evenbeck, Associate Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate Education, The Undergraduate Education Center, Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis; Dr. Lewis L. Jones, Dean, Undergraduate Studies, California State University, San Bernardino; Dr. William H. Scheuerle, Dean, Undergraduate Studies, University of South Florida; and Dr. Eric White, Director, Division of Undergraduate Studies, The Pennsylvania State University.

Despite the diversity of institutional type and the strength of many small, private colleges, the truth of American higher education is that the vast majority of undergraduates are educated in mid- to large-sized public or, to a less extent, private universities. Although powerful images pervade our notions of collegiate life—campuses with ivy-covered buildings, pipe-smoking, tweed-wearing faculty greeting individual students by name and chatting as they saunter across campus together, pep rallies before the Saturday game—they are also mythical and do not describe the reality of undergraduate life for most students. More likely, freshmen soon become familiar with large classes taught by graduate assistants, crumbling buildings, a distant faculty burdened with multiple roles, painful competition for popular courses and majors, and often, their own lack of preparation to cope successfully with the academic and social pressures of their new environment.
In struggling to find ways to enhance the undergraduate experience and to meet the needs of new populations of students without sacrificing other aspects of their mission, universities have developed new administrative structures and new administrative positions to serve undergraduates, particularly freshmen. As previous chapters illustrate, a lower-division unit or a university college offers one way to structure the new students' experience of the university, to personalize it, to provide support during a period of adjustment, and to assist in navigating its bureaucracy. A university college attempts to make real the ideal of concern for the development of the whole person within the context of a complex institution.

Many freshman colleges, but not all, have therefore been founded within medium to large public comprehensive or research universities. Butler University (Chapter 6) is one example of a university college within a comprehensive private university. Yet another is the College of General Studies within a very different type of institution, Liberty University.

College of General Studies, Liberty University

Established in the fall of 1988 to focus on the needs of freshman and sophomore students, the College of General Studies administers orientation, testing, advising, general education, the freshman honor society, the freshman seminar, the learning center, the career center, and honors program as well as the interdisciplinary and

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general studies degree programs. Even though Liberty is a relatively small institution, coordinating these functions closely seemed essential to its mission.

Learning Centers or Centers for Teaching and Learning are coming to assume a dominant position in freshman colleges. Liberty's College of General Studies administers the Bruckner Learning Center which offers not only developmental programs, but also courses for future teachers in developing strategies to incorporate appropriate study skills in all subject areas at all grade levels. The center also provides assistance for standardized academic testing and administers a university-wide tutoring and testing center. The testing center both offers free tutoring to students and administers make-up tests on behalf of the faculty. Combining services for faculty and for students in a related center also appears to be a trend for freshman colleges.

Another trend is the inclusion of Career Services or a Career Center. In 1990 the Career Center was placed under the College of General Studies at Liberty University. Associating the center directly with academics has built bridges with faculty, according to the college dean. The director makes presentations in various courses, faculty refer students more frequently, and the Career Center's services are more visible on campus.

Undergraduate Education Center, Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis (IUPUI)

Recognizing many of the same needs that led to the creation of a freshman college on some campuses resulted in different solutions on others. Like Penn State (Chapter 4), some universities elected to create a unit offering comprehensive services to first- and second-year students but not to give that unit college status. Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis (IUPUI), for example, formed the Undergraduate Education Center in 1990 as a unit for counseling, advising, and student developmental services operating in support of the academic programs of the degree-granting units of the university.

The mission of the Undergraduate Education Center is to assist entering students by providing access, guidance, and academic support as appropriate. Similar in its comprehensiveness to many university colleges, what perhaps distinguishes this center from comparable units is its adoption of the following specific guiding principles: (a) to be an "experimenting place," in the words of Richard Light who coordinates assessment activities at Harvard, and (b) to create an intentional programmatic link for increasing students' involvement in learning, establishing and supporting high expectations for students, and providing assessment and feedback.

Consistent with the quality movement now influencing higher education, the Undergraduate Education Center has determined that setting high expectations, fostering student involvement, and providing assessment and feedback are their benchmarks for work with students. With these expectations in mind, the center has created faculty, student, and staff teams for improving service to students. One specific way in which this philosophical basis plays out is that all new students are asked to make a formal commitment to academic excellence during orientation and to make it real by signing a covenant also signed by the center's director. That agreement details what is deemed necessary for academic success at IUPUI, and the Undergraduate Education Center offers a number of programs and services to enable students to achieve academic excellence.

Divisions of Undergraduate Studies, Statewide University System in Florida

The creation of a Division of Undergraduate Studies is another approach to addressing concerns about undergraduate education and the needs of first-year students. The public institutions in the state of Florida offer a range of models. In the state university system in Florida, which consists of nine universities—the University of Florida (Gainesville), Florida State University (Tallahassee), Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (Tallahassee), the University of South Florida (Tampa), the University of Central Florida (Orlando), Florida Atlantic University (Boca Raton), the University of West Florida (Pensacola), and the University of North Florida (Jacksonville)—all but the University of Florida and the University of North Florida have Divisions of Undergraduate Studies or, in the case of Florida A&M, the School of General Studies.

The divisions differ slightly in the number and kinds of units that report to the divisional dean; some, for example, include Financial Aid or the Registrar's Office. But, basically, all serve three major functions: to provide an academic home for undecided/undeclared students, to enhance the student's undergraduate education by providing academic support services, and to supervise undergraduate program activities that may span more than one college such as ROTCs, honors programs, and cooperative education. A fourth emerging function may also apply. Because of the tendency of the Florida legislature to micromanage many aspects of higher education, supervising and monitoring compliance with pertinent state rules and laws, as well as university-wide policies and rules, have evolved into a new responsibility for the undergraduate studies unit.

A good example of the Florida model, the Division of Undergraduate Studies at the University of South Florida offers an instructive history in the rise and fall of a concept as well. The Division was established in 1981 by a provost who believed that the academic support services scattered among Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, and other units needed to be situated in one area under Academic Affairs to serve undergraduate students more effectively and efficiently. The decision to establish an undergraduate studies division rather than a college rested on previous history—the decision to phase out the College of Basic Studies in 1971. That college had been a hybrid between a university college and a degree college. Like many university colleges, the College of Basic Studies was the academic home for all new freshmen who had to complete general education requirements before entering one of the other colleges at the university. Students graduating with a B.A. were also required to take a final integrative "Senior Seminar," a course administered by the College of Basic Studies.

Unlike most university colleges, however, this one had its own faculty (tenured and untenured) and offered majors and degrees in advanced basic studies and in humanities. It was also the home for intercollegiate majors combining liberal and professional studies. In conjunction with the College of Education, the College of Basic Studies offered a Master of Arts in Humanities Education. Praised by advocates and condemned by opponents throughout its history, the opponents finally had the louder voices, and in 1971 a major restructuring occurred. The College of Liberal Arts was sub-divided, and the College of Basic Studies dissolved. All academic units previously in those two colleges were reorganized into four discrete colleges: Language and Literature (later Arts and Letters), Fine Arts, Natural Sciences, and Social and Behavioral Sciences. Many of the non-classroom academic services that had been housed in the College of Basic Studies were scattered, assigned either to the Vice President of Student Affairs, the Office of Academic Affairs, or unnaturally squeezed into academic units.

In establishing the Division of Undergraduate Studies in 1981, the University of South Florida made the statement that a single undergraduate unit was essential to concentrate basic academic services that do not fit logically into one college. In many ways, the Division of Undergraduate Studies would serve undergraduate students as the Graduate School served its students. Headed by a dean who reports to the provost and serves on the Provost Council and on the Council of Deans, the division works closely with the colleges and other academic units and with student service areas. Through its many programs and support services the division attempts to influence positively the academic performances of the undergraduate students at the university. (See Appendix C for the organization chart and mission statement.)
Those programs may be grouped into four main areas: 1) university-wide academic programs, such as ROTCs, Honors, Cooperative Education, Career Resource Center, University Experience

Course, and Off-campus Term Program; 2) academic advising, counseling, and retention programs, including the Center for Academic Advising and programs for special populations of students; 3) new student orientation required of all new undergraduates; and 4) university-wide support services including senior and alumni placement and career planning and advising through the Career Resource Center, articulation with community colleges, academic services for students with disabilities, testing services for faculty and students, computerized advising system, and a tutorial center.

The dean also supervises a university-wide academic advising committee consisting of assistant deans or coordinators of advising from the colleges. This committee helps to coordinate all undergraduate advising and to initiate changes in academic policies. Though history may have precluded college status, in serving as an enrollment unit and in the range of responsibilities and programs, the Division of Undergraduate Studies at the University of South Florida is very similar to the University Colleges at Ball State, Rhode Island, and elsewhere.

Undergraduate Studies, Statewide University System in California

While University Colleges and Divisions of Undergraduate Studies often function as free standing units of student enrollment, offices of undergraduate education or studies may be structured around various components of the undergraduate experience, such as general education, and emphasize the need to provide advocacy for undergraduates. Deans of Undergraduate Studies may have many of the responsibilities of deans of a university college or directors of undergraduate studies, but more often their role is largely to coordinate aspects of the curriculum such as multicultural or diversity requirements, writing across the curriculum, or insuring the implementation of a general education program. The Statewide University System in California with its twenty public universities exemplifies this variety.

Within the California university system, several institutions have a division and/or a dean of undergraduate studies or undergraduate programs. Others have an associate vice-president for academic programs responsible for undergraduate programs. Not only do these titles vary, but the meaning of the term "undergraduate studies" also differs among campuses. On some, undergraduate studies includes responsibility for coordinating curriculum development and the articulation of programs and courses. On others, undergraduate studies means operational, managerial responsibility for such functions and departments as the Educational Opportunity Program, the Advising Center, the Learning Center, Testing, and the like. Some undergraduate studies units were established specifically to bring academically-related student support services from the Division of Student Affairs to Academic Affairs so that faculty and academic officers would have both authority and accountability for all activities related to efforts to retain students and provide educational equity.

At some campuses, the undergraduate dean is responsible for interdisciplinary and university-wide academic programs, such as honors, study abroad, freshman seminar, ROTC, general education, and a liberal studies major. The dean may also be responsible for a range of programs for undeclared majors, and undergraduate studies may serve as an enrollment unit for them.

In 1986 California State University at San Bernardino, for example, created a unit entitled Undergraduate Studies to consolidate and focus programs, policies, and practices to improve student retention and to increase the success of disadvantaged and under-represented students. Departments most directly related to retention and educational equity report to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, including Student Support Services, Educational Opportunity Program, Learning Center, Advising Center, Academic Services, Counseling and Testing, Intensive Learning Experience (developmental studies), Freshman Seminar, Faculty/Student Mentoring Program, and the General Education Program. Beyond that direct responsibility, the unit also serves to assist academic departments and faculty to coordinate and improve faculty- and student-centered efforts to support its mission, such as the First-Year Seminar, Intensive Learning Experience, the General Education Program, the Writing Center, Writing across the Curriculum, Multi-cultural and Gender Studies, the faculty-student mentoring program, and advising.

Other deans of undergraduate studies occupy a very different position. To the extent that undergraduate studies deans head a unit which neither generates credit hours nor officially enrolls students nor offers its own programs, their role is ambiguous and their place in the institution tenuous. Even more than most, they depend on strong support from the president and provost and institutional recognition of the significance of undergraduate education. As advocates for undergraduates, deans of undergraduate studies also must cut across collegiate lines, enlisting the support and goodwill of fellow deans to foster high quality undergraduate education.

The Survey: Institutions without a Freshman College

That institutions without university colleges are struggling to find appropriate ways to organize academic services for undergraduates, to reduce attrition, to improve general education, and to enhance the quality of the undergraduate experience is clear from the responses to the survey discussed in Chapter 1. Although a number of these institutions already have an advising center, one often just for undeclared majors, 53% were currently examining their system of advising and academic support services and 47% (with about 10% overlap) had done so in the past five years. Clearly, 31% are considering establishing an advising center; 38% a university college, and 50% other options which ranged from mandated advising and freshman year experience courses to enlarging the responsibility of the undergraduate advising center or appointing an administrator to coordinate services and administer the core curriculum (multiple answers were possible on the survey questionnaire). Respondents noted the following needs: to provide more assistance for undecided students and more personal attention for freshmen and sophomores, especially "those who have not firmly committed to a particular degree program;" to add "equal and quality advising and decrease the territoriality of colleges;" to provide "uniformity, continuity, and improved retention;" to reduce "confusion for students;" and to offer "better service for students who have previously had relatively little academic advising help."

Of the 47% of institutions that had examined their advising system within the last five years, 90% had made changes as a result. Most had moved in the direction of centralizing services or administratively coordinating them. Several had created an academic advising center or hired a coordinator to oversee advising through the colleges. Another had created a student resources division including a comprehensive advisement center, a cooperative learning center and a bridge program, a combination that begins to sound rather like a division of undergraduate studies. Others had either refined advising procedures, had begun to be more intrusive about advising, or had made advising mandatory. Still others had created a position of coordinator of the freshman year; another noted that "a new position was created to organize resources differently: Dean of Undergraduate Studies."

Given the idiosyncratic way in which special populations of students, advising and other academic student services, and enforcement of academic policies and procedures are handled at this group of institutions without university colleges, accurate generalizations are difficult to draw from the data. One can, however, with some confidence observe that the more decentralized the institution in these matters, the more likely that the quality of services will be uneven from unit to unit and that academic appeals and decisions receive different responses depending upon where and to whom they are made. *T*-tests for comparison of both survey types yield five areas of difference that proved to be statistically significant:

- Students find services centralized and connected.
- Special populations of students are more

likely to find their specific needs addressed.

- Services are offered in many different forms.
- The advising center is assigned a broader range of responsibilities and services.
- The advising center does more to monitor advising quality.

When services are centralized, as they are in institutions with a university college, students have a "one-stop" location and are more likely to find all academic support services together with connections between and among orientation, advising, learning assistance, and increasingly, career planning and placement services. Special programs that cut across degree-colleges are also likely to be affiliated with a university college; programs ranging from developmental studies to honors programs and from off campus study programs to interdisciplinary, general studies, or individualized degree programs.

The second major difference concerns the ways in which the needs of special populations of students are addressed. For example, undecided students are often advised only reluctantly at institutions dependent on departmental advising by faculty. In contrast, the flexibility of the university college makes it possible for an institution quickly to address the needs of new populations of students as they emerge, such as the increasing numbers of learning disabled students in higher education. Experienced both in advising and in providing learning assistance, the university college often already has staff in place prepared to help learning disabled students and to assist faculty in addressing their learning style differences.

How a university college can make a difference to a specific group of students is particularly clear in the case of the growing number of "majorless" students, those denied access to their first choice major because that major is "oversubscribed" or "impacted." Both samples of institutions report significant numbers of academic majors that currently limit enrollment (see Figures 10 and 11, Chapter 1), and these numbers are increasing. This relatively new phenomenon, a growing problem in higher education, means that a student may earn satisfactory grades and otherwise be making adequate progress toward a degree, but for reasons of department or college resources, be unable to progress into the chosen major. The practice of restricting access to majors, once confined to professional programs like business or engineering, now affects even traditional fields in the arts and sciences like psychology and speech communication. (See Appendix B for a fuller description of this problem and a set of guidelines developed by the Association of Deans to insure fair and equitable treatment of students.) Freshman colleges offer a wide range of services to assist students caught without an academic home: for example, discipline-specific workshops, information about "cognate" majors, special career-related advising, and Ohio State's NACADA/ACT award-winning "Alternatives course." In contrast, "counseling" was the only service offered by the matched group of institutions with no freshman college. As these examples suggest, the university college model offers to all the students it serves more and greater variety of services than are available at comparable institutions without a freshman college.

In particular, the advising center assumes a broader range of responsibilities and services as the core of a freshman or university college. One of the respondents from the non-university college group noted, for example, that "our [advising] center advises all of the above [groups of students] but without having specifically identified programs for each." Institutions with an advising center are likely to provide special programs for undeclared majors and for students on probation. A number of institutions also have special programs for minority students and for student-athletes; otherwise, only general advising by faculty takes place.

The fifth and final area of significant difference concerns procedures the institution implements to monitor advising quality. At institutions with a freshman college, advisors are trained and often provided with advising mentors; the college gets feedback and evaluations from students about advisors and the advising system. The system is continuously reviewed and improved, and advising services are typically coordinated across the university. Some of these services occur at institutions without a university college, of course, but responses like "there is not a campus-wide system for monitoring advising" or "unfortunately no systematic campus-wide evaluation or monitoring of academic advising [exists]" appear frequently. This finding corresponds with the 1991 ACT Survey of Academic Advising which indicates that while more institutions are concerned with evaluating advisement and advisor training than in 1987, regular program evaluation is still conducted at only 50% of all responding institutions; and well under half of all four-year institutions (40% of private; 11%, public) mandate training of faculty advisors (Habley, 1992).

No single administrative model can, of course, meet or anticipate all the needs presented by the diverse students entering higher education today. The evidence strongly suggests, however, that centralizing or closely coordinating services for new students in a single college or division yields not only higher quality services but often better retention and greater student satisfaction as well.

Chapter 10 – Issues for New University Colleges

Diane W. Strommer

Institutional histories, like all history, can be instructive. The experiences over time of the freshman colleges and divisions of undergraduate studies described in these pages suggest not just their strengths but also imply matters that must be resolved and some potential pitfalls that are best avoided by institutions exploring such models.

One strength of a university college is its flexibility which allows very different institutions with very different student bodies to change over time. At different types of institutions and at different periods in its history, the freshman college can be that place on campus where the institution responds to changing societal needs. However flexible it may be, a freshman college takes its particular institutional shape as a result of key decisions made as the college is planned. These decisions center on: 1) programs and relationships, 2) enrollment and advising, 3) student development, and 4) institutional politics.

Programs and Relationships

A university college or division of undergraduate studies is positioned at several crossroads. For the student, university college becomes the place which assists with key transitions. The college helps students first to make a smooth transition from high school to higher education and later into a degree college committed to a specific major. For the institution the freshman college may be the location of responsibility for a number of matters critical to undergraduate education, matters such as articulation with high schools and community colleges, orientation programs and freshman year experience seminars, assessment, general education, retention, and learning assistance. In some of these areas the responsibilities of a university college or division of undergraduate studies may extend throughout the undergraduate years and into other institutional domains.

Developing a committee structure and other mechanisms to foster clear lines of responsibility and close communication with other areas of the university are obviously essential to the success of the college and its programs. Ball State, Ohio State, and the historically black colleges and universities in this monograph all illustrate how a university college might work with other areas of the university to retain students; Butler suggests one model for a relationship with the general education program. Ohio University and Ball State suggest some ways in which the freshman college can encourage and reward excellence in teaching; and the University of Rhode Island exemplifies a strengthened relationship with the Division of Student Development.

Many programs and services offered by these colleges once had a different institutional location. While centralizing them makes sense for students and the institution, dislocation and

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change come at a price. A staff member in student affairs who creates and nurtures a fledgling tutoring program understandably feels possessive of that program; a senior faculty member who has devoted years to creating special honors courses and convincing her colleagues to do so as well may feel she "owns" the honors program. Such faculty and staff will not greet a new college which is taking over their programs with enthusiasm. The battle wounds from the turf war that shifting the location of a program may create can fester for years if the process is not handled with sensitivity and imagination. Both faculty and administrative leadership and involvement in the planning as well as a clear understanding of the problems to be solved and the possibilities inherent in a restructuring help to reduce the number of wounds that change inevitably creates.

Many of the colleges described here have grown by accretion, adding programs and services gradually from a beginning as a centralized advising unit (University of Rhode Island) or as a unit designed for retention (Ball State University). The process may take decades or just a few years, but adding additional programs to the college over time whenever the time is right appears to be a typical as well as least disruptive process.

Some freshman units are deliberately linked with the degree colleges through a system of "programs coordinators" (Penn State) or "resource center coordinators" (Ball State) hired by them but housed in each academic college. These models offer ideal coordination for an advising system throughout the undergraduate years. Without concern for advising at the upper-division level and coordination with what has gone before, a fine centralized system for freshmen and sophomores can deteriorate into chaos for juniors. Sometimes all that is necessary is a representative, institution-wide advising committee with oversight and coordinating responsibility for advising. Others have close ties with both academic affairs and student development (University of Rhode Island) with the Dean of University College serving both on the Council of Deans and on the administrative staff of the Vice President for Student Development.

Space and technology. The advantages of administrative centralization can quickly be lost if programs and services are physically distant from one another. If faculty advisors continue to advise in their department offices, for example, many of the problems of a decentralized system persist. If a variety of programs to provide learning assistance are scattered around campus, students will remain confused even if one unit is administratively responsible for them.

The freshman college needs a central location with private spaces for advisors to meet with students and offices for clerical and administrative staff and other program directors. Whatever the space required, it needs to be equipped to use and to anticipate increasing use of technological support systems.

Telephone registration, degree audit systems, computerized appointment calendars, transcript interchange and transfer articulation modules for evaluation, student profiles created from the results of entering student questionnaires, and E-mail as an advising tool are just a few of the ways in which technology can serve advising; learning centers and career services benefit from computers, interactive video, CD-ROM, and other media. Having appropriate technology frees faculty and staff to meet students' broader educational needs rather than to serve just as providers of information. E-mail, particularly, can revolutionize the way in which students communicate with one another, with advisors, and with the services of a freshman college.

Enrollment and Advising

Who the college is to serve may seem to be a simple question with a self-evident answer, but in fact often rouses strikingly different views. Some colleges or divisions enroll only students who have not selected a major; some serve other special populations in addition to the "undecided." More commonly, they enroll all entering freshmen. An all-inclusive unit is preferable; for restricting enrollment to the undecided—with or without other special populations—is to make those students feel as if they do not quite measure up to freshmen enrolled directly in a degree college. Students will recognize a dumping ground if one is created. To create a unit just for those students who do not fit immediately into neat institutional divisions, like an academic department, not only does them a disservice but also ignores the reality that virtually all major selection is tenuous during the first year. As one researcher recently noted, "the time has come to recognize formally in our policies and practices that the majority of entering students are in an undecided mode. Being undecided is not the exception, but rather the norm" (Lewallen, 1993, p. 110).

By design, university colleges and divisions of undergraduate studies serve lower-division students. The assumption is that students move on to their degree college when they select or confirm their choice of major and/or complete the core curriculum. Most institutions need to create specific policies delimiting that transition so it will be smooth and timely. Policies providing some latitude work best—neither delaying the transfer much beyond the sophomore year nor forcing premature choice, while also allowing early deciders to move into their major fairly quickly, perhaps by the end of the first year or so. What happens to students who meet the standards to be retained in the institution but do not meet the standards of their major is another issue that needs to be resolved at the outset (see Appendix B).

Special populations. As previous chapters illustrate, most freshman units have developed programs and services for special populations of students. Many of these have grown over time, but it is useful at the outset to identify programs that could or should be affiliated with the freshman college or groups of students whose needs are not being fully met who could benefit from more directed advising or other support services. Students undecided about a choice of major or denied access to their chosen field, older students, students with learning disabilities, students from disadvantaged backgrounds, students for whom English is a foreign language—these and others often need special or different assistance to be successful in higher education. Their needs should be considered in the design of a new enrollment unit. On some campuses, separate services have emerged for virtually each identifiable special population of students, and it is often cost-effective as well as educationally sound to bring these groups into the centralized enrollment unit for new students to centralize services.

Delivery system. Advising is at the core of a freshman college which offers its students the advantages of a centralized advising model. That organizational model, however, is distinct from the delivery of advising services. Who is to advise is a separate matter, one requiring early resolution. As previous chapters indicate, some units rely on professional advisors, perhaps supplemented by graduate students or peer advisors; others, primarily on faculty.

Each delivery system contains its own special issues and concerns. Training, rewarding, and evaluating faculty advisors are more difficult than with professional staff, but a faculty-based system has the advantage of forging ties between faculty and new students. Advising creates a context for a relationship different from the classroom, a relationship beneficial and instructive to both. Professional advisors, on the other hand, offer the advantage that they are professional. Advising is their primary concern; they understand the developmental issues of the college years. In addition, they often are trained in decision making about careers and major choice; and they often provide more accurate information about institutional requirements, rules, and regulations.

Budgetary considerations often drive the selection of a delivery system, sometimes with the erroneous assumption that faculty are cost-free while the professional advisor or graduate student pose new costs. Faculty time has real value, of course, whether paid in release time, in a salary supplement, or by not taking time from another contribution. Rarely is faculty's advising time cost-free. Whichever delivery system is selected, however, insuring a reasonable ratio between advisor and advisee is vital. No magic number exists, but some guidance is suggested by the experiences related in earlier chapters, particularly those at Ball State, Penn State, and Ohio State.

Student Development

Even without a specifically articulated position, institutions with a special enrollment unit for lower-division students clearly believe that students develop over time, that the first year is transitional and often difficult for new students, and that freshmen need a system of services and support that, say, juniors have outgrown. The creation of such units is a statement about the extent to which an institution values first-year students and is concerned about their success. Because students and their parents find the prospect of a transitional college or division reassuring, many institutions find their freshman college or undergraduate division to be a distinct asset when recruiting new students.

Because of the close relationship between these divisions and colleges and the entire freshman year experience, sooner or later most become responsible for or take a significant role in orientation programs and general education, offer or coordinate a freshman seminar program, contain the institution's programs of learning assistance, and have a special responsibility for retention. Fewer are responsible for assessing students' learning during the undergraduate years, although some deans and directors predict that responsibility will soon follow.

The Politics of a Freshman College.

Despite its many strengths, the place on campus of a university college or division of undergraduate studies differs markedly from virtually any other administrative unit on campus except perhaps the Graduate School (which enrolls the most prestigious students rather than the least). Like members of the central administration, the dean or director of a university college must maintain an institution-wide perspective based on a clear sense of institutional mission and an understanding of contemporary undergraduates and their educational needs.

The lack of a faculty creates both challenge and opportunity. Because a university college has no automatic constituency, its dean must look elsewhere to develop a base of support and understanding for the aims of the college. While faculty support continues to be vital, that support stems from faculty interest in undergraduates rather than disciplinary ties. The trend to affiliate the freshman college in some way with faculty development programs enables the staff of the freshman college to relate to faculty on the basis of shared interest in and concern for student learning. The very lack of a faculty for which the dean is responsible can also facilitate a consistent, sharp focus on students and their needs. The staff of these administrative units can and should be the campus experts on undergraduate students and their development, fostering understanding of each new and diverse entering class and quickly sensing changes in the campus climate.

University Colleges and Divisions of Undergraduate Studies tend to be evaluated and reconsidered frequently, probably in part because of the human tendency to forget problems that have been solved. Institutional memory is sometimes short, and in today's budgetary climate re-evaluation may accompany each change in the central administration, change which at many institutions occurs all too frequently. Those who have been there report, however, that difficult as such re-evaluations may be, each reaffirms the value of the division or the college to the institution and its students. The frequency of evaluation diminishes over time as the college earns a secure place in institutional history and mission.

That has not always been the case. Twenty or thirty years ago, approximately half a dozen university or general colleges were dissolved. The College of Basic Studies at the University of South Florida, the predecessor to the Division of Undergraduate Studies discussed above, is a case in point. While having much in common with the administrative units described here, most of the early university or general colleges also had a faculty hired explicitly to teach the general education program or core courses with the result that often two different departments developed in a single discipline, one teaching general education math or English, for example, and the other teaching all other courses in the major. The demise of those colleges can be attributed more to the tensions inherent in having a faculty whose sole responsibility was to deliver the general education program or core than to their failings in the rest of their mission. At the same time, the general education programs themselves were perceived as outmoded or inflexible.

Freshman colleges thrive in institutions that assume, consciously or not, a populist, "value-added" conception of undergraduate education. They also thrive where the administration and faculty realize, as Weingarten comments in *Undergraduate Education*, that "colleges are not just course-giving institutions; [that] effectiveness in education, rather, requires one to be open to a complex set of pedagogic means" (1992, p. 8). University colleges teach through advising, through tutoring, through offering students many diverse experiences as well as through courses such as freshman seminars.

Conclusion

More than one way to insure excellence in undergraduate education clearly exists, and many institutions without a university college are attentive to freshmen, heedful of their needs, and otherwise insure a high quality undergraduate experience. In Chapter 2 of this monograph, Crowl observed that over time the University College has proved to be a remarkably flexible administrative unit in addressing issues of access and opportunity as higher education moved from being a privilege for the few to a necessity for the many. Long before the quality movement came to higher education with its emphasis on the customer, the University College addressed the needs and concerns of diverse groups of students, sought ways to support them, raise their expectations, and involve them in their university experience. University College deans were and are institutional advocates for the needs and rights of these diverse undergraduates. With a university-wide perspective and a concentration of effort in the freshman year experience, the University College can offer centralized, comprehensive services efficiently to insure consistency and compassion in the treatment of all students, personalizing even the largest university. The goal for all institutions should be an undergraduate education of the highest quality; the evidence is considerable that a special freshman college or division furthers that goal.

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Appendices

Appendix A

ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I – Name

This organization shall be called the Association of Deans and Directors of University Colleges and Undergraduate Studies.

ARTICLE II – Purposes

This association is established as a non-profit organization for Deans and Directors—or those with equivalent responsibilities—and their assistants and associates of Colleges or Divisions within institutions of higher education which are enrollment units responsible for advising and other programs and services focusing on the broad academic experiences of undergraduate students. Its specific purposes are:

(1) To establish a community of professional colleagues;

(2) To arrange annual meetings as a forum to discuss common problems of higher education as they relate to the mission of our colleges or divisions, to share ideas, to define issues, and to seek solutions;

(3) To provide a source of information for institutions interested in organizational structures on the University College, Undergraduate Studies, or General College model.

ARTICLE III – Membership

The eligible membership of the organization shall consist of (1) appropriate units of duly accredited institutions which include such enrollment units as University Colleges (of the lower-division advising type), Divisions of Undergraduate Studies, and General Colleges and (2) such institutions or organizations as may subsequently be admitted under the provisions of the By-Laws.

ARTICLE IV – Voting Rights

Each member institution shall have one vote.

ARTICLE V – Meetings

An Annual Meeting shall be held at a time and place to be determined at the previous year's meeting. Non-member institutions may send representatives to no more than two annual meetings before applying for membership, if appropriate.

ARTICLE VI – Officers

The officers of this organization shall be a president, a president-elect, and a secretary-treasurer. The officers shall perform duties, serve terms, and shall be elected or appointed as set forth in the By-laws.

ARTICLE VII – Dues and Fees

Upon acceptance as members, each institution shall pay a one-time membership fee. Annual institutional dues and changes in the membership fee may be established by a two-thirds vote of the members responding on a mail ballot.

ARTICLE VIII – Fiscal Policies

No part of the income of the Association shall be used to the benefit of or be distributable to its members, directors, officers, or other private persons, except that the Association may pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and make payments in the furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article II hereof through an agency or agencies which shall at that time qualify as tax-exempt under appropriate sections of the Internal Revenue Code.

ARTICLE IX – Amendments

Amendments to the Constitution can be adopted by a two-thirds majority of the total membership, either in a business session or by a mail ballot. Proposals to amend may be initiated by the Officers or by a petition presented through them by a member institution. Amendments shall be acted upon only after written notice of at least fourteen days.

ARTICLE X – By-laws

The Association may adopt By-Laws for the conduct of its affairs that are consistent with this Constitution. Such By-Laws may be accepted, repealed or amended at any Annual Meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and eligible to vote, or by mail ballot by a majority of eligible member institutions. Amendments shall be acted upon only after written notice of at least fourteen days.

Presented: March 1990
Adopted: March 1991

ASSOCIATION BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I – Officers

In order to be eligible for office, an individual shall be employed by a member institution and shall have appropriate institutional responsibilities, as described in Article II of the Constitution.

ARTICLE II – President

Except for the first president who shall be elected for a one-year term, the President shall succeed from the position of President-Elect and shall serve for a one-year term. The President shall preside at the opening and closing sessions of the annual meeting. In the absence of the President, the President-Elect shall act in his/her stead. If the President does not remain qualified, the President-Elect shall succeed to the Presidency and there shall be a vacancy in that office.

The President shall take office at the close of the Annual Meeting and shall serve until the close of the Annual Meeting at the end of his/her term.

ARTICLE III – President-Elect

The President-Elect shall be elected by the general membership for a one-year period at the Annual Meeting. The President-Elect shall serve as program chair and shall perform the duties of the President in the absence of the latter. The President and the President-Elect shall not be employed by the same institution.

The President-Elect shall take office at the close of the Annual Meeting at which he/she is elected and serve in that capacity until the close of the Annual Meeting at the end of his/her term.

If the President-Elect becomes disqualified during his/her one year in that office, the President shall solicit nominations by mail from the membership. Election shall be by mail ballot.

ARTICLE IV – Secretary Treasurer

The Secretary-Treasurer shall be elected by the general membership for a one-year period at the Annual Meeting. He or she shall take office at the close of the Annual meeting at which he/she is elected and serve in that capacity until the close of the Annual Meeting at the end of his/her term. He/she is eligible for re-election.

The Secretary-Treasurer will maintain the membership lists of the Association and make an annual report of financial status to the membership.

ARTICLE V – Executive Committee

The President, President-Elect, and Secretary-Treasurer shall serve as the Executive Committee of the organization, drawing upon other members to help fulfill their functions if necessary. Among their functions shall be recommendations for membership to the Association, the nomination of candidates from the membership for the office of President-Elect and Secretary-Treasurer, and planning the location and program for the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE VI – Annual Business Meeting

A business meeting will be conducted at each annual meeting. Two-thirds of the membership present will constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE VII – Fiscal Policies

[Such policies required by the IRS for tax exempt status will be included here when that process is complete.]

Presented: March 1990
Adopted: March 1991

Appendix B

Guidelines for Over-subscribed or Impacted Programs

Requiring second-tier admissions to certain majors has become an increasingly common practice in higher education, particularly at large universities, as a means of coping with students' fluctuating academic interests. As the fortunes of computer science and education programs evince, when the job market changes and one hot field supplants another, major shifts in student interest occur in relatively brief periods of time. In colleges and universities nationwide junior level shut-outs occur not only in fields like business or engineering (fields in which demand actually is waning), but even in traditional arts and sciences majors such as psychology and speech communication. Some of the newer areas which are hard pressed to welcome all comers include environmental studies and anything with communications in its name.

Confronted with the impossibility of meeting student demand for certain programs, a demand which may rapidly change while department size and budgets remain static or decline, many departments and colleges have elected to limit program enrollment at the sophomore or junior year level. Besides the long-standing freshman "killer course," typical controls include the imposition of specific standards that all prospective majors must meet—such as requiring engineering students to earn a C+ in all prerequisite math and science courses—or a numerical limit met by floating standards—such as selecting the 200 junior-level accounting majors to be accepted by beginning at the top of a rank roster and counting down 200 spaces. One year a 2.6 may be required to enter the program; 2.3 might be good enough the next.

Among academic administrators in higher education, probably no group is more concerned with such issues from the students' perspective than the members of the Association of Deans and Directors of University Colleges and Undergraduate Studies. As heads of administrative units which enroll freshmen and sophomores and who often have responsibility for orientation, retention, academic support programs, teaching/learning centers, and general education, these administrators have viewed the proliferation of limited access programs with heightened alarm. They have seen students drifting without an academic home, semester after semester, making satisfactory progress but not toward a degree. They have seen students denied access to a major with a grade point average that would have been good enough a year ago. They have heard the tales from students encouraged by well meaning colleagues to try "just one more semester" to make the 3.0

required. The cost to the students in lost dreams and expectations and the cost to their families in lengthened degree programs compel, at the very least, policies and practices which insure fair and equitable treatment.

At their sixth annual meeting held in March 1992 in Washington, D.C., members of the Association adopted a set of guidelines to insure fair and equitable treatment of students. Recognizing that institutions cannot always shift resources to coincide with changing student interests, these deans and directors of lower-division programs believe the following practices can minimize the worst effects of second-tier admissions on students.

What is suggested below are ten broad parameters within which a campus may develop specific guidelines appropriate to its governance procedures, involving curriculum committees and Faculty or University Senates to whatever extent typical for emergency programmatic changes.

1. Authority for declaring a program "limited access" should rest with the Provost or Vice President for Academic Affairs, should be based on evidence, and should be for a specified period of time. At some institutions, apparently, departments are allowed to limit access for reasons that are not always defensible. Granting special status to a program only for a limited time—one to two years—recognizes the fluidity of the situation. Some internal reallocation may provide relief and student interests change.

2. All literature to prospective and newly admitted freshmen and transfer students should alert them to any special requirements that must be met to enter the major field of study or to remain in it after a certain point. Statements should appear in the Undergraduate Catalog, the acceptance letter, and any other pertinent information sent to prospective or enrolled students.

3. If access to the major is limited, access to those courses which constitute the major should also be limited. While this appears self-evident, apparently some departments do indeed deny access to the major on the basis of resources but continue to allow students into their courses. Such backdoor access makes a mockery of the initial denial and results in allowing students to fulfill degree requirements without accepting them as majors.

   Departments with limited enrollments may need to devote some resources to developing and staffing courses to meet the general education or other specified needs of the student body, but major courses should remain restricted to accepted majors for whom there should be sufficient space to take required courses in sequence.

4. Criteria for internal transfer from one program to another should be clear and clearly communicated to enrolled students. Since some of the best majors enter a program as internal transfers, guidelines should be sufficiently flexible so as not to give undue preference to early deciders.

5. If the criteria for internal transfer or retention in the major include passing certain courses at a specific grade level, a clear, defensible relationship should exist between and among those courses, the grade, and the major.

6. Review records of prospective majors at frequent intervals, beginning at the end of the first semester of the freshman year (or equivalent for part-time students). Then communicate their status in writing to 1) those unlikely to qualify for the major; 2) those who may qualify if their performance improves in certain ways; and 3) those who are meeting the standards of progress toward acceptance into the major.

7. Most limited access programs use a strict grade point average and number system to determine students' eligibility for internal transfer. Thus, if room exists for 80 students and 150 wish to gain access to the program, 70 or so are selected from the top

down of a rank- ordered list, leaving some room for warranted exceptions or the consideration of other attributes. Although grade point average is clearly not the best criteria for many programs, most students (and their parents) do find it a rational method of choice as they do not, for example, a lottery system. But any criteria should be considered in relationship to the academic and other demands of the field of study and to its impact on under-represented groups of students. We encourage such consideration of talents and skills not so easily measured as academic achievement.

8. Establish a cut off point after which students may not continue to qualify for the major and must make a different choice. That cut-off point may be different for different groups of students. Those earning less than a C average, for example, may be notified in the freshman year, while stronger students may not be notified until the end of the third semester of full-time enrollment. All students should know precisely where they stand by the end of their sophomore year, but whenever possible, the cutoff point should come even earlier. Students should be notified in writing of their status and the reason or reasons for the decision.

9. Never place students in a holding pattern. Any student appeal should result in a yes/no decision. Reasons for exceptions to the stated criteria should be clear and consistently applied.

10. Couple bad news with support services. If student numbers are large, those services may need to be increased. Because students denied access to the major of their choice often believe they are also denied access to their chosen career (and sometimes are), they need knowledgeable help from advisors and career counselors who understand their grief and anger and who know how to guide students in exploring new possibilities and finding alternative ways to meet their goals. Workshops and courses in selecting alternative majors can help students understand what options realistically exist for them at their home institution or elsewhere.

In the long run, it may be useful for colleges and universities to rethink the paths we create to lead to a degree and the relationship between the jobs students want and the majors they pursue. We may need to move beyond the accumulation of credits as the only way of credentialing students in their major and to think more broadly about what we educate our students to do and where they and how they might do it. In the meantime, however, we cannot in conscience continue to create what one campus refers to as "boat people," students who meet the institution's academic standards but not those of their chosen major, and so drift from department to department searching for an appropriate academic home.

Note: Some of this material appeared in an article by Dr. Diane Strommer in the Bulletin of the American Association for Higher Education in June, 1993.

Appendix C

Sample Mission Statements and Organization Charts

Mission Statements
Alabama A&M University
Ball State University
Butler University
Ohio University
The Ohio State University
The Pennsylvania State University
The University of Rhode Island
The University of South Florida

Organization Charts
Alabama A&M University
Ball State University
Ohio University
University of Rhode Island
University of Southern Florida

University College, Alabama A&M University

The University College at AAMU is responsible for the core curriculum for undergraduate degree programs in cooperation with other undergraduate schools and provides academic support services to help students succeed in college. More specifically, the unit is committed to: (a) instructional programs which accommodate the varied needs of students from diverse academic backgrounds; (b) learning outcomes assessment activities; and (c) academic support services to help enrolled and prospective students achieve their educational goals. University College also serves as the point of entry for all freshmen and new transfer students and certifies their completion of requirements for entrance to degree-granting programs.

Objectives. The primary goal for the University College is to provide a comprehensive academic unit to assist entry level students in acquiring the requisite skills and competencies for entrance into degree-granting programs, success in upper division courses of study, and persistence in college. Specific objectives are as follows:

1) to provide instructional and academic support programs to meet the varied intellectual needs of pre-college and lower-level college students to include ongoing evaluation of instructional effectiveness and monitoring student progress through the prescribed course of study;
2) to coordinate in conjunction with other academic units a performance-based core curriculum for undergraduate degree programs;
3) to provide students with effective academic advising to help them succeed in college and achieve their educational goals; and
4) to certify that lower level students complete the designated course of study and meet requirements for transfer to upper division degree-granting programs.

The University College concept provides structural cohesiveness and clear focus for a single system of interrelated programs that are designed to stimulate and enrich the educational experiences for pre-college and matriculating lower-level students and to increase their persistence and success in college.

University College, Ball State University

University College is an interdisciplinary, collaborative academic unit that seeks to enhance the teaching and learning environment for both students and faculty. University College fosters productive academic habits for all students through personalized academic advising, peer tutoring, career exploration, and other academic support services; and, through the Center for Teaching and Learning, it provides faculty with opportunities to explore pedagogical issues and to improve teaching.

University College, Butler University

University College exists to meet the fundamental academic needs of all undergraduate students through its responsibilities for academic orientation activities and delivery of the undergraduate core curriculum. University College also serves as the enrollment and advising unit for all undergraduates with fewer than 58 semester credit hours, except those majoring in the fine arts. University College grants all Butler University Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees and all advanced placement credit.

The curriculum of the University College offers students the broad general education that is basic for all walks of life and for effective citizenship in a democratic society. The curriculum is designed to strengthen reading, writing, speaking, critical thinking, and computational skills; to introduce basic intellectual disciplines; and to broaden the student's appreciation of world cultures.

University College, Ohio University

University College exists to serve and support advising programs across the university and specific advising needs of undecided students. It also has the responsibility for the administration of the University's General Education Program, Precollege orientation, and programs to enhance teaching and learning.

University College, The Ohio State University

University College seeks to advance The Ohio State University's goals of teaching, research, and service. The college will furnish designated lower division students with the assistance needed to begin to take full advantage of the diverse educational opportunities at Ohio State. The college will provide services that assist students to acquire knowledge and skills necessary to become productive members of the university community and to select an academic program best suited to their individual abilities, interest, and career goals. During enrollment in University College, students will develop a fuller understanding of their own purposes and goals as well as those of the university.

Division of Undergraduate Studies, The Pennsylvania State University

The Division of Undergraduate Studies derives its strength from the administration's commitment to the exploratory student, from the conceptual development of an effective model for the delivery of advising programs, and from a staff of highly professional advisers who are leaders in the field. The advising programs at Penn State have been enhanced with the establishment of DUS Programs Coordinators in each college and each campus. The mission of DUS is to provide Penn State undergraduates with an academic home where they can begin or continue to explore their curricular options. DUS also delivers, in coordination with the college and campuses, an effective program of freshman testing, educational planning, and academic advising and a network of academic information centers to support the academic advising efforts of the university.

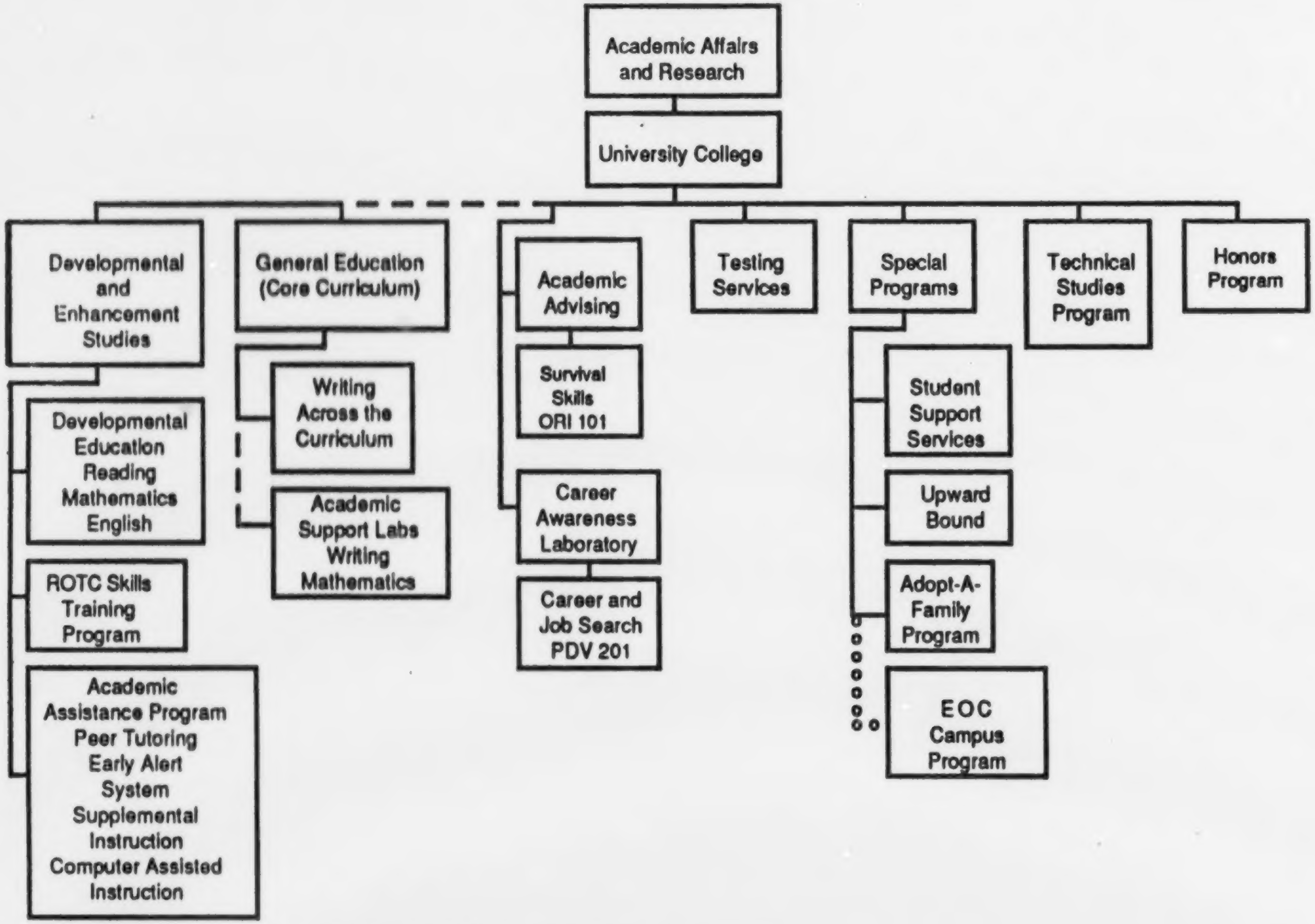
University College and Special Academic Programs, The University of Rhode Island

Our common mission is to provide programs, activities, services, and experiences to encourage the intellectual, emotional, and vocational growth and development of our students. Through advising, counseling, teaching, and training, our goal is to contribute to students' understanding of themselves and their potential and to enrich their experiences during their university years. Our programs thus aid students in integrating their classroom experiences with other educational resources both within the university and external to it as they grow in competence and commitment, developing their capacity to learn, to lead productive, independent lives, and to participate as citizens of the larger communities in which we live.

Division of Undergraduate Studies, University of South Florida

The Division of Undergraduate Studies is an academic home for undeclared/undecided students; is responsible for providing university-wide academic support services and for supervising academic programs outside the confines of a single college; is responsible for supervising and monitoring all state and university-wide degree requirements; is responsible for approving and monitoring university undergraduate academic matters, policies, procedures, and curricula changes; for serving as an institutional resource information center for Board of Regents, Department of Education, and legislative rules and laws pertaining to undergraduate education in the state university system.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

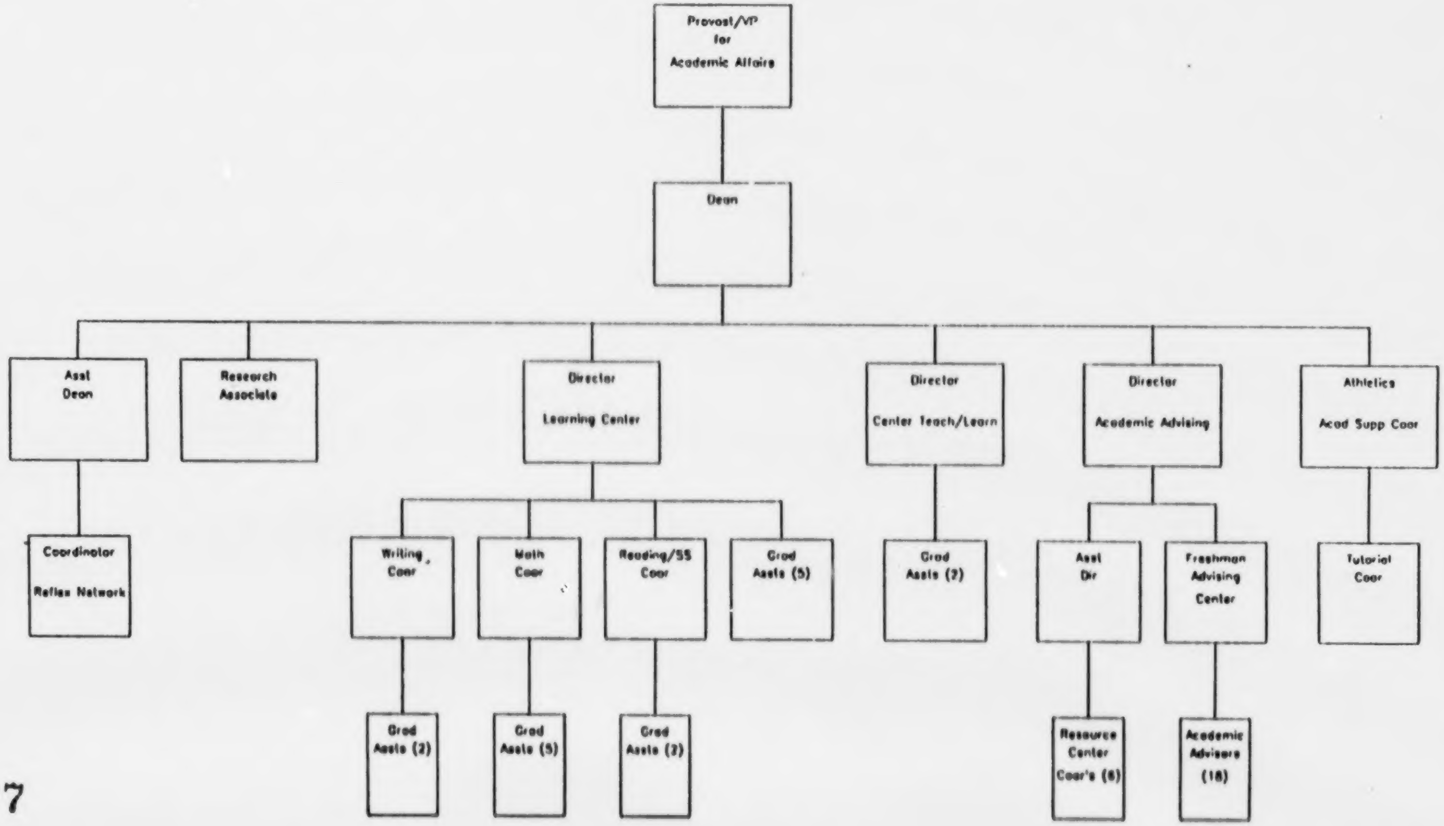

Academic Affairs and Research
University College
Developmental and Enhancement Studies
Developmental Education Reading Mathematics English
ROTC Skills Training Program
Academic Assistance Program Peer Tutoring Early Alert System Supplemental Instruction Computer Assisted Instruction
General Education (Core Curriculum)
Writing Across the Curriculum
Academic Support Labs Writing Mathematics
Academic Advising
Survival Skills ORI 101
Career Awareness Laboratory
Career and Job Search PDV 201
Testing Services
Special Programs
Student Support Services
Upward Bound
Adopt-A-Family Program
EOC Campus Program
Technical Studies Program
Honors Program

— — — In cooperation with the respective academic departments

oooooooo In cooperation with the North Alabama Educational Opportunity Center

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Ball State University


Provost/VP for Academic Affairs
Dean
Asst Dean
Research Associate
Director Learning Center
Director Center Teach/Learn
Director Academic Advising
Athletics Acad Supp Coor
Coordinator Reflex Network
Writing Coor
Math Coor
Reading/SS Coor
Grad Assts (5)
Grad Assts (2)
Asst Dir
Freshman Advising Center
Tutorial Coor
Grad Assts (2)
Grad Assts (5)
Grad Assts (2)
Resource Center Coor's (6)
Academic Advisors (18)

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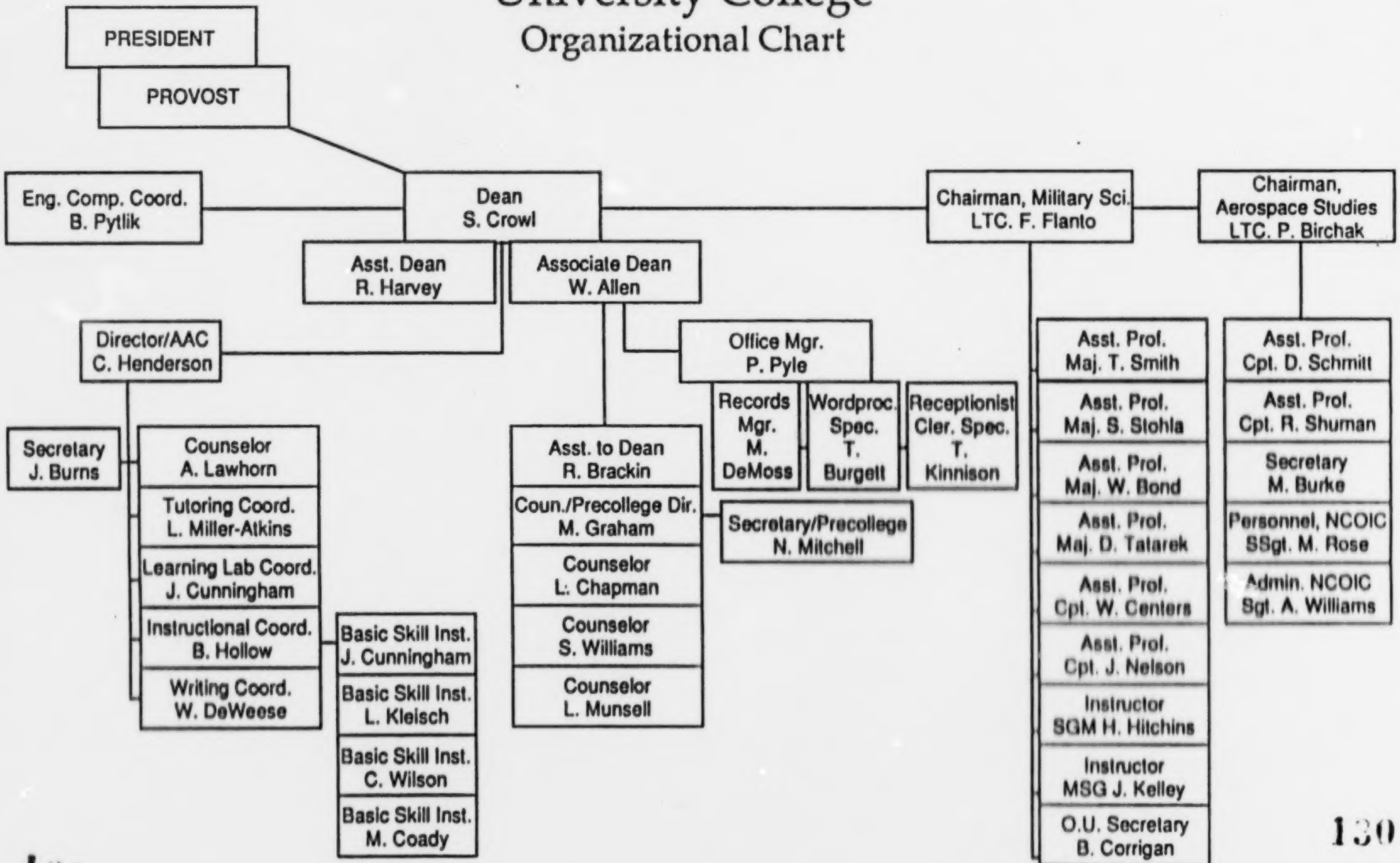
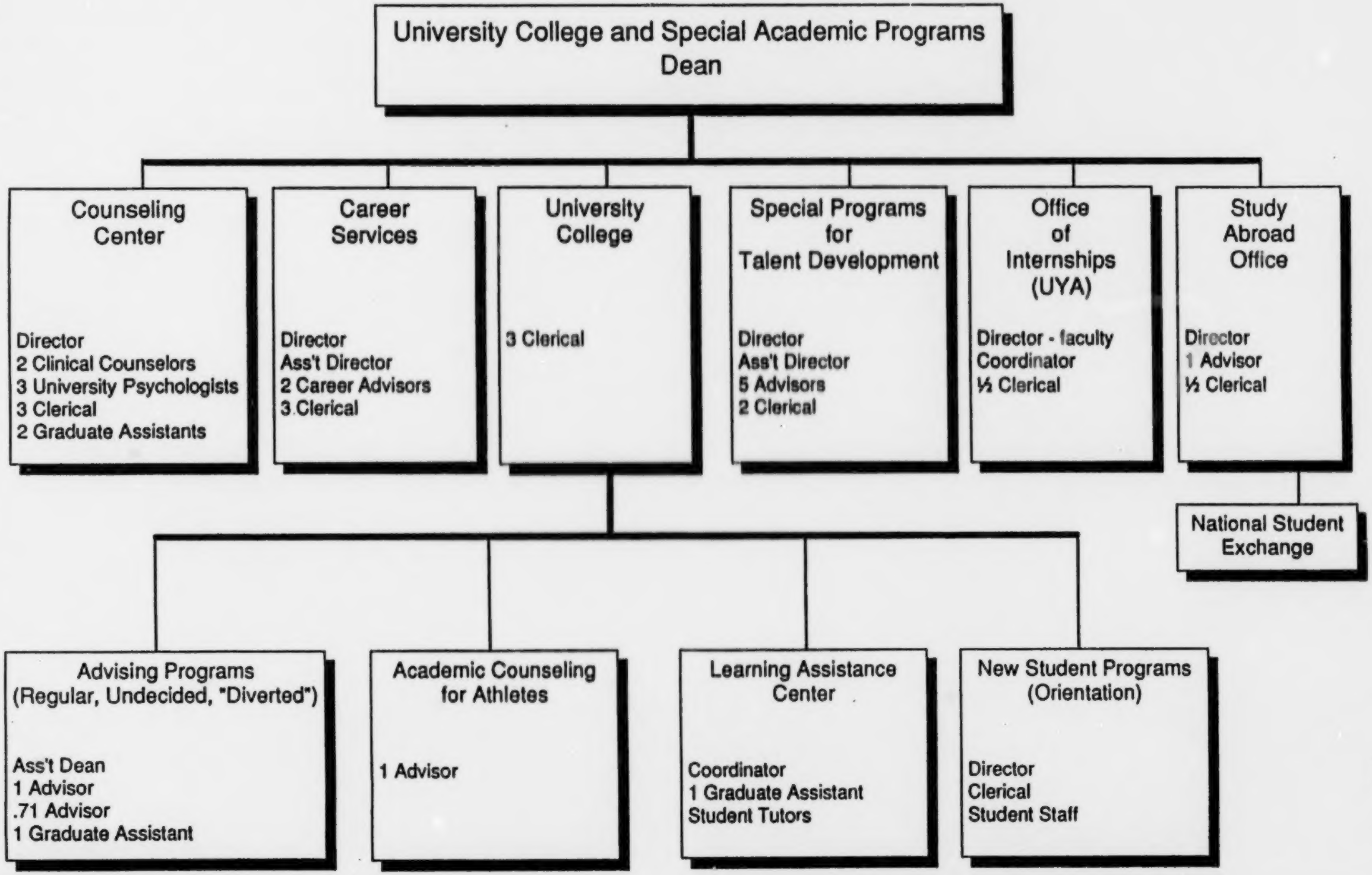
OHIO UNIVERSITY

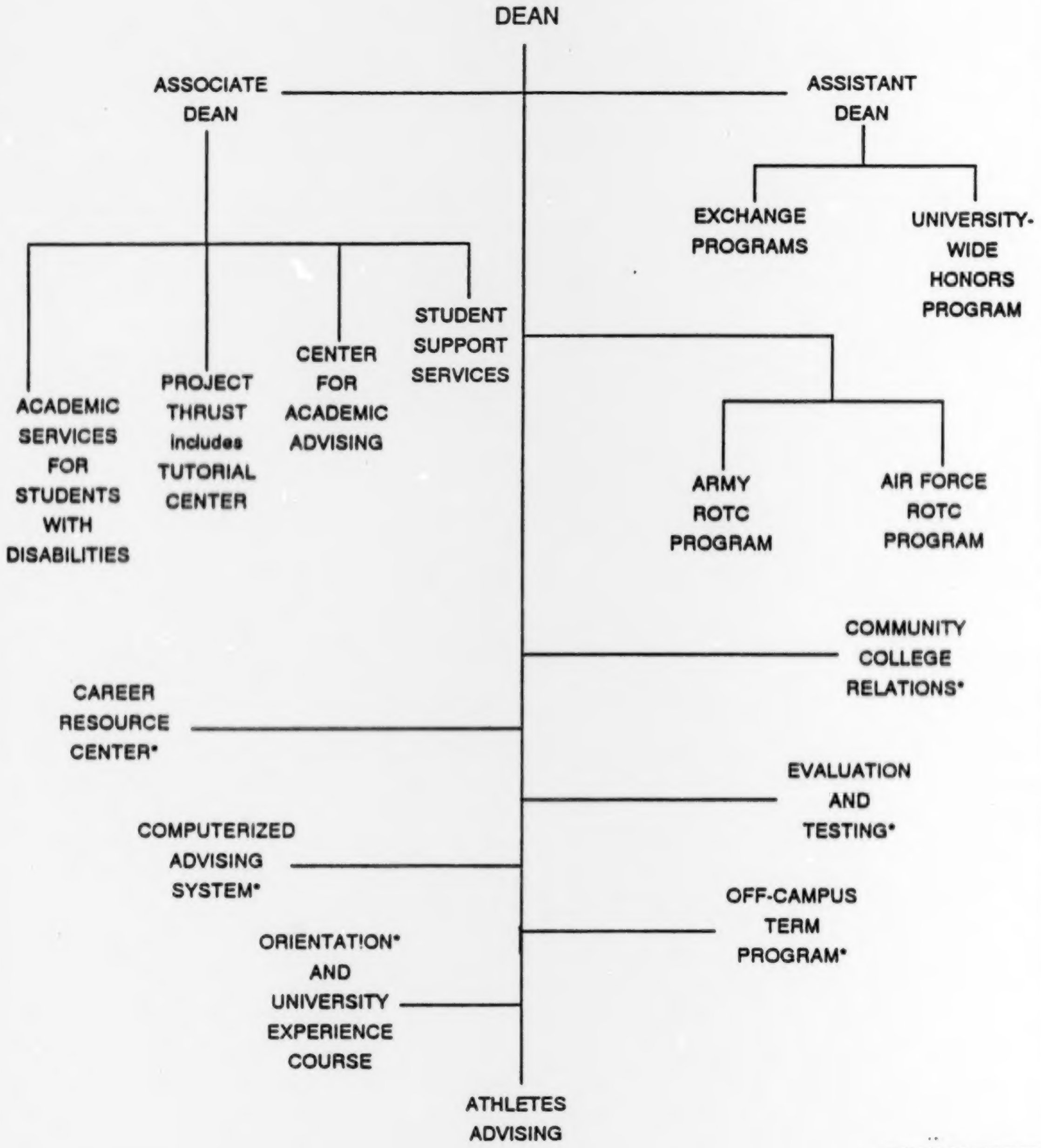
University College
Organizational Chart


PRESIDENT
PROVOST
Dean S. Crowl
Eng. Comp. Coord. B. Pytlik
Asst. Dean R. Harvey
Associate Dean W. Allen
Director/AAC C. Henderson
Secretary J. Burns
Counselor A. Lawhorn
Tutoring Coord. L. Miller-Atkins
Learning Lab Coord. J. Cunningham
Instructional Coord. B. Hollow
Writing Coord. W. DeWeese
Basic Skill Inst. J. Cunningham
Basic Skill Inst. L. Kleisch
Basic Skill Inst. C. Wilson
Basic Skill Inst. M. Coady
Office Mgr. P. Pyle
Records Mgr. M. DeMoss
Wordproc. Spec. T. Burgett
Receptionist Cler. Spec. T. Kinnison
Asst. to Dean R. Brackin
Coun./Precollege Dir. M. Graham
Secretary/Precollege N. Mitchell
Counselor L. Chapman
Counselor S. Williams
Counselor L. Munsell
Chairman, Military Sci. LTC. F. Flanto
Asst. Prof. Maj. T. Smith
Asst. Prof. Maj. S. Stohla
Asst. Prof. Maj. W. Bond
Asst. Prof. Maj. D. Tatarek
Asst. Prof. Cpt. W. Centers
Asst. Prof. Cpt. J. Nelson
Instructor SGM H. Hitchins
Instructor MSG J. Kelley
O.U. Secretary B. Corrigan
Chairman, Aerospace Studies LTC. P. Birchak
Asst. Prof. Cpt. D. Schmitt
Asst. Prof. Cpt. R. Shuman
Secretary M. Burke
Personnel, NCOIC SSgt. M. Rose
Admin. NCOIC Sgt. A. Williams

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND


University College and Special Academic Programs
Dean
Counseling Center
Director
2 Clinical Counselors
3 University Psychologists
3 Clerical
2 Graduate Assistants
Career Services
Director
Ass't Director
2 Career Advisors
3 Clerical
University College
3 Clerical
Special Programs for Talent Development
Director
Ass't Director
5 Advisors
2 Clerical
Office of Internships (UYA)
Director - faculty
Coordinator
½ Clerical
Study Abroad Office
Director
1 Advisor
½ Clerical
National Student Exchange
Advising Programs (Regular, Undecided, "Diverted")
Ass't Dean
1 Advisor
.71 Advisor
1 Graduate Assistant
Academic Counseling for Athletes
1 Advisor
Learning Assistance Center
Coordinator
1 Graduate Assistant
Student Tutors
New Student Programs (Orientation)
Director
Clerical
Student Staff

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA
UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES


DEAN
ASSOCIATE DEAN
ASSISTANT DEAN
EXCHANGE PROGRAMS
UNIVERSITY-WIDE HONORS PROGRAM
ACADEMIC SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
PROJECT THRUST includes TUTORIAL CENTER
CENTER FOR ACADEMIC ADVISING
STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES
ARMY ROTC PROGRAM
AIR FORCE ROTC PROGRAM
COMMUNITY COLLEGE RELATIONS*
CAREER RESOURCE CENTER*
EVALUATION AND TESTING*
COMPUTERIZED ADVISING SYSTEM*
OFF-CAMPUS TERM PROGRAM*
ORIENTATION* AND UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE COURSE
ATHLETES ADVISING

*HEADED BY DIRECTORS

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